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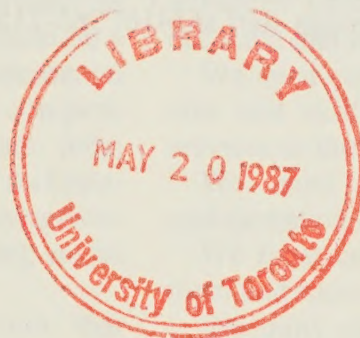


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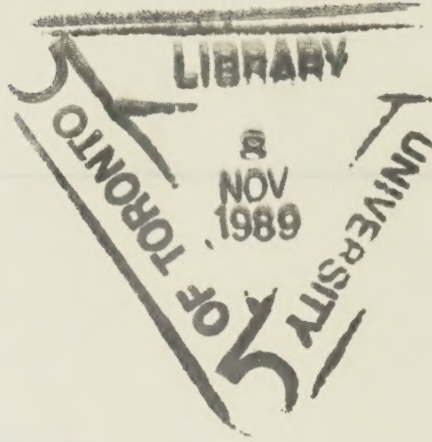
Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, April 28, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, April 28, 1987

The Third Session of the 33rd Parliament of the province of Ontario opened at 3:03 p.m. for the dispatch of business pursuant to a proclamation of the Honourable Lincoln Alexander, Lieutenant Governor of the province.

The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor, having entered the chamber and being seated upon the throne, was pleased to open the session with the following gracious speech.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Hon. Mr. Alexander: Pray be seated.

Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly, I have the honour of welcoming you to the opening of the Third Session of the 33rd Parliament of Ontario.

The previous throne speech set forward an agenda for the next decade. It put Ontario on a clear course to mastering our most fundamental challenges: building an internationally competitive economy to preserve and create jobs; attaining new standards of excellence and relevance in education and training; and strengthening our ability to meet rapidly changing social needs.

My government will operate within that framework to ensure that our province takes its place as a world-class society of the 21st century.

Ontario is currently enjoying a period of sustained economic growth. During the last two years, real gross provincial product has grown by 9.4 per cent. This year it will exceed the \$200-billion level.

During the past two years, more than 300,000 new jobs have been created in Ontario, an unprecedented level for any two-year period in our history.

Ontario's unemployment rate has fallen to 6.9 per cent, the lowest in Canada.

Increased consumer confidence is reflected in the growth of retail sales, which in 1986 were up by nine per cent over the previous year. At the same time, price increases have been moderate and the inflation rate stands at 4.2 per cent.

Our overall level of economic buoyancy has allowed us to address many of the chronic underfunding problems that have diminished the capacities of our education and training systems, hospitals and social services.

Our goal is to revitalize our institutions and programs to serve the people of Ontario, make them more accessible to everyone in all parts of the province and equip them to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Si nous voulons que l'Ontario continue à faire face à ses obligations sociales, il nous faudra maintenir une économie forte et vibrante.

While our overall economic outlook is favourable, we must convert short-term economic strengths into long-term economic stability.

Regardless of the outcome of bilateral trade talks with the United States, we must fortify our capacity to compete in the international marketplace.

We must compete by putting the most advanced technology in the hands of the best educated and best trained work force.

We must compete by becoming more aggressive and skilful at marketing our goods and services to the world.

We must compete by strengthening our transportation network.

We must compete by attracting new investment and more visitors.

We must compete by bringing together the best minds of industry, labour, universities and government in the development of creative solutions.

We must compete by involving the people of this province in all of the decisions that affect their economic and social future.

The people of Ontario are expressing a renewed sense of self-reliance. There is a rekindling of the entrepreneurial spirit. More and more small business ventures are being launched.

People across the province are assuming more responsibility for the quality of life in their communities. They are setting high standards of performance for themselves and their children. They are striving to reach their full potential.

My government will support them.

We will extend the hand of opportunity and social justice to all Ontarians and assist those who are unable to grasp it on their own.

We will develop a system of flexible, community-based programs and services that respond to changing social and economic needs.

We recognize that individuals, neighbourhoods and communities best know their own needs, and we will involve them in planning and choosing the services they require.

Programs and services will be made available on a decentralized basis; close at hand and easy to find. They will respect the dignity, independence and unique needs of each individual. They will reflect cultural and regional diversity.

At the same time, my government is committed to guaranteeing equal economic opportunity for all, including northern and eastern Ontarians, women, visible minorities and natives.

My government will direct priority attention to the following areas:

Establishing high standards in education and training and expanding opportunities for life-long learning;

Improving Ontario's competitive position in order to preserve and create jobs;

Creating full and equal economic opportunity for women;

Providing more affordable housing;

Increasing independent living opportunities for seniors and the disabled;

Strengthening environmental protection;

Enhancing health and safety protection for workers;

Increasing the emphasis in health care on the prevention of illness and the adoption of healthy living habits, while enhancing our world-class medical treatment and research facilities;

Promoting multicultural diversity in our political, social, cultural and economic institutions.

1510

We will seek to attain these goals in a fiscally responsible manner, because the people of Ontario wish to leave their children with the flexibility they will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

In these and all matters, my government is mindful of the fact that it is the servant of the people. We will continue to provide government that is as open and fair, as caring and compassionate as the people of Ontario. We will provide the sensitive, responsive leadership required to keep pace with complex and rapidly changing social and economic conditions.

We will be guided by the principle that the government which governs best is the government that reaches out to the greatest number of people.

In an increasingly knowledge-intensive world economy, a relevant and purposeful education is critical to personal growth and economic development.

My government's goal is to create an education system that sets high standards in helping students to reach their full potential.

Our schools must provide a curriculum and an experience that are relevant and meaningful to students. They must graduate students who are well prepared in the fundamentals of literacy and basic math skills, as well as in the new fundamentals of science and technology.

They must produce graduates with finely tuned intellectual and problem-solving skills, graduates with the flexibility and knowledge to carry out sophisticated and rapidly changing tasks.

They must provide young people with the skills needed for a lifetime of learning. In an information society, knowing how to learn may be as important as knowing what to learn.

In recent years, shifting population patterns have strained the ability of our schools to perform effectively. At the same time, changing social needs demand that we look to new and creative ways of using our school facilities.

Schools are an invaluable community resource. They are education and recreation facilities, child care and community centres.

An investment in our schools is an investment in the future of our communities.

We will soon announce details of a major new capital funding program to alleviate overcrowded classrooms and modernize our education facilities. This initiative will support more than 300 projects for over 100 school boards. It will help ensure that people in all parts of the province have equal access to quality education, while improving our ability to meet community needs.

My government will pay particular attention to the learning needs of younger children. Excellence must begin early.

As a first step, we will undertake learning skills projects based at selected elementary schools. These projects will bring together school boards, faculties of education and members of the community to develop teaching strategies for literacy, numeracy and other basic learning skills. These demonstration projects will become an important source of information, ideas and resource materials for teachers across the province.

My government will work in partnership with the teachers of Ontario to implement a number of other initiatives aimed at renewing an emphasis on literacy in the early grades, including improving the literacy focus in training and qualification courses for teachers, principals and

curriculum planners and developing resources to help school boards assess literacy skills.

Our goal is to ensure that Ontario's young people master the traditional literacy, language and mathematics, and the new literacy, computer skills and science.

In recognition of the importance of familiarizing our children with new technologies, we will increase the use of computers throughout our school system and promote the development of appropriate software.

This renewed commitment to basic learning skills in the early school years will ensure that all students are equipped with the fundamental tools needed to succeed. Further action will be taken to reinforce their overall education and life skills at the secondary school level.

My government will introduce measures to reduce the unacceptably high drop-out rate at the secondary school level.

The most recent research indicates that one third of all students leave school without receiving a grade 12 diploma. This statistic represents a double loss: a loss of opportunity for the individual and a loss of talent to society.

About 25 per cent of teenagers without a high school diploma are unemployed, as are one in five men and women in their early 20s who have not completed high school.

My government will take steps to reduce the drop-out rate in Ontario by one third within the next five years. Further substantial reductions will be achieved in subsequent years.

Earlier this year, my government announced that it would undertake a study of the school drop-out problem. To complement and support this initiative, we will identify and publish innovative responses to the drop-out situation, develop pilot projects and co-ordinate existing government initiatives.

We will tailor the curriculum for students enrolled in general and basic level courses to foster a desire to stay in school, and help students identify and pursue career interests.

Building on last year's efforts, more opportunities will be provided for students to participate in co-operative education. The co-operative education approach has demonstrated considerable success in improving the relevance of the school experience and building strong links to the world of work. Programs will be shaped to meet the specific needs of individual regions.

Recognizing the gaps in educational support services for students in northern Ontario, my government will initiate efforts to increase the level of service provided to that region by teacher

diagnosticians and other required specialists. Priority will be given to the particular needs of francophone students.

My government will expand distance education opportunities in the French language. Increased support will be provided to TVOntario for curriculum programming in French.

Ontario has one of the best teaching forces in the world, but there are continuing pressures on the profession and on individual teachers to respond to new demands and to maintain professional expertise.

My government has undertaken a major review of the training and professional requirements for teachers in the years ahead. A research paper has been issued and public response has been invited. Based upon this dialogue, my government will enhance the provisions for teacher training and professional development.

My government will provide ongoing support to our post-secondary institutions in their development as centres of excellence.

Throughout the past two years, we have taken steps to revitalize our colleges and universities so that they can better prepare Ontarians for the 21st century. Operating funds have been substantially enriched. Special funding has been targeted to promote excellence through faculty renewal, improved research support and enhanced equipment and library resources.

We have increased accessibility through an improved Ontario student assistance program and a network of distance education sites throughout the north.

My government will soon announce a substantial increase in capital funds so Ontario colleges and universities can renew their infrastructure and strengthen their ability to deliver quality education.

At the same time, we will continue to implement initiatives to encourage areas of specialization and co-operation and to discourage unnecessary areas of duplication.

1520

No individual can achieve his or her potential or contribute fully to family and society when a need as basic as shelter is beyond reach. A caring and compassionate society such as ours must mobilize its resources in an effort to ensure that affordable, quality housing is available to all.

My government will accelerate its effort to resolve the chronic housing problems in Ontario. We will provide new opportunities for shelter for those with low and moderate incomes.

Throughout the past year, we have taken steps towards this end, based on a philosophy of openness and consultation.

Under the assured housing policy, we inaugurated a program to create affordable quality housing across the province.

We established a climate of fairness and security for tenants.

We improved the human and physical environment for our public housing tenants.

We launched a strategy for the building industry to ensure that it can compete successfully in an advanced technological era.

My government will continue to build on this foundation in order to deal with the serious problems that confront those who are unable to find affordable, quality shelter.

More funds will be provided to expand the annual supply of assisted housing.

A "housing first" policy will be applied to all available provincial lands to create more housing for low- and moderate-income earners. Where lands are deemed inappropriate for such use they will be sold and the proceeds applied to an assured housing development initiative.

We invite the federal government and all municipal governments to join with us in committing their leadership and resources for this effort.

An innovative program will be introduced in partnership with the private sector to create new units within the reach of moderate-income families. It will offer affordable leases that can lead to an option to purchase.

Home owners and municipalities will be encouraged to explore creative low-cost approaches to increasing housing supply.

A strengthened initiative in supportive community living will provide housing and integrated support services for the homeless, the disabled, discharged psychiatric patients, victims of family violence, the frail elderly and others with special needs. Our commitment is to ensure that these individuals can live with maximum independence, dignity and stability.

My government will introduce measures this session to improve conditions for roomers, boarders and lodgers. New initiatives will also be undertaken to increase the supply of affordable housing for these people and to improve the quality of existing dwellings.

In addition to these initiatives to increase the supply of housing, we will aggressively pursue methods of reducing the cost of construction itself.

Through improved productivity, new training initiatives, streamlined regulations and the adoption of new technology, we can lower the cost of

housing while maintaining the vitality of this important industry.

My government is committed to the principle that all people in Ontario should be able to live independently for as long as possible.

We will produce a broad range of accessible community supports to encourage, foster and expand opportunities for independent living for seniors, the physically disabled, the developmentally handicapped and discharged psychiatric patients.

We will continue to fulfil our commitment to improve the quality of life for Ontario's senior citizens.

My government will build on a series of initiatives announced last June to further the development of a more accessible and effective system of community care alternatives.

The integrated homemaker program, which was introduced in 16 sites, will be expanded in the next year to include an additional 12 sites. Funds will be provided to subsidize training courses for homemakers and to selectively improve their rate of pay.

Annual provincial expenditures for home support services, which have doubled in the past two years, will be further enriched. Existing services will be expanded and new ones established. They will be targeted to meet the needs of francophones, native persons and the people of northern and eastern Ontario.

A pilot project will provide seniors in selected areas with single-source access to a variety of services.

Financial assistance will be provided to increase the mobility of the elderly and the disabled in rural areas.

More funds will be provided for the development of Alzheimer community support services.

A special capital fund will be established to provide improved access to community facilities for the elderly and disabled persons.

The ceiling on provincial operating funds for social and recreational centres will be increased. Funding will be provided for an additional 25 centres, with priority given to those emphasizing health maintenance.

A program will be established to help individuals who are approaching retirement adjust to changes in finance, health and leisure activities.

Funds will be provided to increase geriatric-gerontological training across the province. This will complement the recently announced funding for the establishment of a multidisciplinary department of geriatrics at McMaster University.

We will explore with the elderly community and private industry the possibility of working in partnership to establish the first centre in Canada for testing and promoting design improvements in consumer products for seniors.

While increasing community services in support of independent living, my government will continue to ensure that high-quality institutional care is provided to those who are unable to live on their own.

We look forward to the passage this session of major amendments to the Nursing Homes Act. This legislation will protect residents' rights and provide for greater public accountability.

My government will provide additional funding to ensure the necessary staff and facilities to improve the quality of life of nursing home residents.

We will invite proposals to establish nursing homes specifically tailored to meet the needs of Ontario's diverse ethnic communities.

We will strive to ensure that seniors receiving institutional care are able to enjoy the same level of dignity as those living independently in the community.

We will continue to create and enhance opportunities for physically disabled individuals to live as independently as possible with or near their families and in their own communities.

My government will improve the availability and criteria for existing support services such as attendant care, home support and respite care; provide physically handicapped children with special services at home; encourage new employment opportunities for people with disabilities; introduce improved services for individuals with acquired brain injuries; increase the availability of specialized transit service and widen the eligibility criteria; expand the assistive devices program over a period of five years. A greater range of devices will be covered and assistance will be provided to more people, including adults. Funds will be provided to support research and development related to new assistive devices.

We will also introduce a special fund to make tourism and recreation programs and facilities more accessible to disabled individuals.

As part of a long-term commitment to community living for people with developmental handicaps, my government will ensure that comprehensive community services are available to them in their own communities.

We will advance to this long-term goal through a series of initiatives that will serve as a road map to increased participation for

the developmentally handicapped residents of Ontario.

1530

In the short term, we will assist people to care for their developmentally handicapped family members at home; provide community living opportunities for many people currently living in institutions and nursing homes; and reform the sheltered workshop system to increase employment opportunities for the developmentally handicapped.

Special emphasis will be placed on the province-wide delivery of mental health services and other support programs for children. The community-based network of children's mental health services will be expanded to provide children with support in their own home and community.

We will implement a comprehensive plan for mental health services in northeastern Ontario. Based on the model used in the service area of the Whitby Psychiatric Hospital, the plan will increase the role of public hospital psychiatric units and local community-based services.

Ontario currently spends more than \$1.5 billion a year on social assistance programs.

Last year, my government appointed a social assistance review committee to determine whether these programs, as constituted, meet the most pressing social needs as effectively as possible. We look forward to receiving the committee's report and to the guidance it will provide us in improving our social assistance system.

We will review with particular interest disincentives and penalties that currently limit the earning capabilities of social service recipients.

The people of Ontario are demonstrating a heightened awareness of the importance of leading a healthy and active lifestyle. My government will introduce measures to help achieve this goal.

We will work towards the creation of a widely accessible, community-based health care system that emphasizes the maintenance of good health and the adoption of healthy living habits.

In addition to improving the quality of health of Ontarians today, these measures will strengthen our capacity to deliver high-quality health care services into the 21st century.

The denticare program, which is being implemented for children from low-income families, emphasizes the importance of prevention, and underscores the need to develop healthy lifestyle patterns at an early age.

My government will inaugurate a major campaign to promote healthy lifestyles among all Ontario citizens.

We will establish community-based addiction services for young people. Priority will be given to the promotion of a drug-free lifestyle.

We will act to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption.

We support the federal government's efforts to promote the adoption of a tobacco-free lifestyle. My government will introduce complementary initiatives to ensure a smoke-free work environment. An expanded assistance program will further encourage farmers to seek viable alternatives to growing tobacco.

We will open new community health care centres and provide additional funding to existing centres to expand the range of services offered. Community health programs play a vital role in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

We will introduce additional measures to encourage increased participation in fitness and recreational activities and promote safety in amateur sports. These measures will include grants to upgrade facilities, install safety equipment and train recreation staff and volunteers.

While stressing the promotion of healthy living habits and the prevention of disease, my government has provided ongoing support to maintain Ontario's world-class treatment and research facilities.

We established a multi-year program to provide \$850 million for the construction of additional hospital beds, including more than \$200 million for the expansion of cancer treatment facilities.

Support has been provided for the construction of special research facilities, such as a new world-class heart research centre at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute.

Funding will be provided to support a range of new women's health services and to expand existing health programs.

The Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS will be advising my government on initiatives to combat the spread of acquired immune deficiency syndrome. This will build on earlier actions, including the provision of funds to: the AIDS Committee of Toronto, for counselling and support programs; the Ministry of Health central laboratory, to set up and operate diagnostic specimen testing of suspected AIDS cases; the University of Toronto, to support a comprehensive epidemiological study; and a Toronto hospital to set up a hospice for people in the advanced stages of AIDS.

We will continue to pay special attention to meeting the health care needs of northern Ontarians. In particular, we will address ways of alleviating chronic shortages of health manpower.

A northern regional office will be established and provided with sufficient resources to identify thoroughly more effective ways of meeting the health care needs of northern Ontarians.

The program to provide physiotherapists in underserved areas will be expanded to include other rehabilitation therapists. The bursary program to subsidize their education costs will be improved.

A feasibility study will be undertaken to determine ways of linking health science centres in southern Ontario with educational centres and health facilities in the north.

Depuis longtemps, l'Ontario jouit d'une réputation internationale en matière de soins de santé. Maintenir cette excellence requiert un effort de révision et de réflexion sur nos besoins futurs.

Last year my government appointed the Ontario Health Review Panel, chaired by Dr. John Evans. The panel is seeking public participation to help identify priorities in meeting the long-term health care needs of the people of Ontario. We look forward to the panel's report, and we will encourage broad public discussion about how to ensure quality health care for all Ontarians into the 21st century.

Safe drinking water and clean air are major and essential components of public health protection.

My government will ensure that Ontario continues to be a world leader in environmental protection.

Ontario's sewage and water distribution systems represent an investment of \$30 billion. We will provide enriched support to help municipalities maintain and rehabilitate sewage and water distribution systems and protect our beaches, lakes, rivers and water supplies. Funds will be provided for projects such as sewage systems improvements, sewer separation, beach cleanup, pollution control plans and agricultural erosion control.

My government will seek federal participation in this effort, which will help solve problems that have an impact on international waterways.

Additional assistance will also be given to larger municipalities to finance water and sewage projects of major environmental significance.

We will introduce a new comprehensive waste management funding program with a strong long-term emphasis on recycling. The program will support municipal initiatives to upgrade

existing landfill sites, and develop alternatives and establish state-of-the-art waste management facilities. The program will also stimulate efforts by Ontario industries to develop effective means of reducing, recycling, reusing and recovering waste products.

My government will encourage co-operative efforts by industry, university and government researchers to ensure the rapid development, diffusion and application of new technologies for pollution control.

We will also act to encourage sustained and continuing investment in pollution abatement and control, in accordance with the municipal industrial strategy for abatement.

In keeping with the acid precipitation agreement that was recently concluded with the government of Canada, Ontario reiterates its strong commitment to achieving the 60 per cent emission reduction required by the Countdown Acid Rain program.

Our efforts alone, however, cannot fully protect our resources from acid rain. We need a similar abatement program from the United States. Ontario will continue to be a strong voice for national and international action in this area.

1540

My government will protect Ontarians from unfair and arbitrary practices in the marketplace. In doing so, we will take steps to promote increased consumer awareness.

We recently announced a comprehensive package of new auto insurance legislation. Among other provisions, the program will cap auto insurance premiums and establish a public review process under which insurance rates must be justified.

This initiative was one part of an overall approach to the cost of automobile insurance. My government looks forward to receiving the results of Mr. Justice Coulter Osborne's examination of the potential benefits of a no-fault insurance system.

My government recently announced a comprehensive car repair protection package. This new initiative will require repair outlets to provide reasonable guarantees for their work. It will also ensure consumers access to all information necessary to make informed decisions regarding the maintenance and repair of their vehicles.

We will introduce legislation to regulate health and fitness clubs.

To further promote consumer protection and awareness, my government will provide funds to support the establishment of a nonprofit institute for consumer research and education. The

institute will have strong links to consumer associations, industry and post-secondary institutions.

Further steps will be taken to improve public access to consumer information.

My government will also respond to consumer needs by ensuring that our laws reflect contemporary social attitudes. We will update the regulations governing the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Ontarians are proud of the richness of the many traditions and cultures that are part of our province. My government will introduce a comprehensive strategy to encourage multicultural diversity in our political, social, cultural and economic institutions.

This strategy will be accompanied by a wide-ranging set of initiatives to ensure that government and its programs reflect Ontario's multicultural reality.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has made a major contribution to equality and harmony in our province. As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the founding of the commission, my government will dedicate additional resources and strengthen its mandate.

We will also establish a race relations directorate to promote racial harmony and help address the needs of racial minorities.

These commitments will strengthen our ability to combat systemic discrimination and help ensure that all residents of Ontario enjoy equal opportunity to employment and fair treatment in the work place.

Ontario is performing a leadership role in promoting and preserving Canadian culture.

A loan subsidy program is strengthening the book publishing industry. The Ontario Film Development Corp. has helped to create an investment climate that has doubled film production in Ontario. The expansion of the small business development corporation program will benefit film, sound recording, publishing and commercial theatre.

We will build on these efforts to foster the development of a viable and dynamic cultural industry.

Funds will be provided to strengthen, revitalize and modernize the Archives of Ontario. As part of that effort, my government will support a project to preserve on microfilm our province's community newspapers—a valuable record of the past. Top priority will be given to collection and preservation of multicultural material.

If Ontario is to create the wealth necessary to meet its present and future needs, we must

improve our ability to compete in a rapidly changing global economy.

A time of economic growth is the best time to build for the future.

Ontario's continuing prosperity rests on our ability to develop and adapt new technologies. New technologies can maintain and strengthen critical industries, improve the quality and marketability of our products and services and create new jobs.

Last year, the government established a Premier's Council to steer Ontario into the forefront of economic leadership and technological innovation.

The council brings together leaders of business, labour, post-secondary education and government. Collectively, these sectors are exploring new and creative solutions that exceed their individual grasp.

Before the end of this year, the council will release the results of a thorough and wide-ranging research study focused on the international competitive position of 15 key Ontario industry sectors, the capabilities of our educational, science and technology infrastructure and a sweeping review of government policy in Canada and abroad.

Through this study, which will be released to the public, and other activities of this council, my government will encourage widespread public discussion concerning ways of improving our overall competitive position.

In the next few months the council will recommend the designation and funding of six centres of excellence in strategic fields. My government is encouraged by the overwhelming response to this initiative, which will stimulate the production of advanced research, train world-class researchers and encourage the transfer and diffusion of technology.

To complement the work of the council, my government will expand the Ontario Development Corp. to include a strategic modernization program. The initiative will selectively assist Ontario firms to develop significant new products and to position themselves as world-scale competitors.

A technology diffusion initiative will be introduced to ensure that government expertise is shared with the private sector. Special emphasis will be placed on staff exchanges and contracting out to private firms to build and strengthen industries with export potential.

Changes in technology and the global marketplace can present tremendous opportunities for Canadian industry. At the same time, industrial

restructuring can have negative side-effects on individual sectors, firms and workers.

While reinforcing the strengths of leading sectors, such as automotive and steel, my government will continue to assist major industries that are facing serious economic pressures.

In order to provide a single mechanism for dealing with critical situations, my government will appoint an industrial restructuring commissioner. The commissioner will assist workers and industries facing major layoffs and plant closures to help explore creative solutions to save jobs.

The commissioner will also be given the long-term task of identifying the restructuring and modernization requirements of industry.

My government appreciates the critically important role that roads and highways play in supporting tourism and all other Ontario industries. The best-made products and the talents of the best-trained work force will improve our competitive position only if we can bring our products to market on time.

My government will improve and protect Ontario's substantial investment in its transportation network.

Major new transportation links will be created to serve high-growth areas.

Funds will be provided for the rehabilitation of provincial highways and roads.

Steps will be taken to integrate services and fares between GO Transit and the Toronto Transit Commission. We will carry out a review of long-term transit requirements in the greater Toronto area to help set priorities for future investment.

1550

The livelihood of one in every three Ontarians depends on our ability to market goods and services outside our province. Ontario will accelerate its export strategy to aggressively pursue new markets while preserving and enhancing its strength in traditional areas.

My government will continue to play a forceful and constructive role in addressing all of the issues involved in the US-Canada trade negotiations and voice its strong concerns about the potential impact an unfavourable agreement could have on all Canadians.

Regardless of the outcome of the bilateral trade negotiations and the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Ontario exporters will face greater competitive pressures in the global marketplace.

In view of the increasing importance of these trade issues, we will continue to develop ways of more effectively monitoring new developments

in the United States and in other major trading nations.

As a first step, my government will establish a program to co-ordinate specialist support to Ontario businesses facing restrictive US trade practices or unfair imports. This program will also improve our ability to increase the flow of timely information regarding bilateral and multi-lateral trade relations.

We will continue to strengthen our strategy to help Ontario industry sell more goods and services to the world.

The previous speech from the throne announced a package of initiatives to strengthen our links with the nations of the Pacific Rim. My government will augment that effort with targeted activity in other parts of the world.

The Indian subcontinent offers unique opportunities as both a market and a source of investment for this province. Ontario will establish a new trade and investment office in India to better represent our interests.

Special trade development assistance will be provided to Ontario forest product exporters. We will help them develop overseas markets by undertaking a study of market opportunities and upgrading technical skills.

We will put increased emphasis on marketing environmental technology and expertise. As part of that effort, we will strengthen our research program to develop methods of detecting and controlling toxic pollutants.

Funding will be provided to establish a centre of international business at an Ontario university. The centre will offer a program of study in trade, marketing, languages and culture.

Tourism is a key source of employment and revenue for the Ontario economy. It is estimated that tourism accounts directly and indirectly for at least nine per cent of total employment in the province and six per cent of gross provincial product.

During the past year, my government has consulted widely with the tourism industry through a series of 16 roundtable discussions held throughout the province.

This dialogue will lead to the development of strategic directions for this important industry.

We will also reinforce the major steps taken during the last year to assist our tourism industry, particularly in northern and eastern Ontario.

More funds will be provided to the Destinations North and East program.

A heritage inns program will be introduced to preserve the architectural flavour of small Ontario communities, enhance their many heri-

tage festivals and provide a unique tourism experience. The program will complement our efforts to help small communities revitalize their downtown areas.

Increased funding will be provided to improve provincial parks.

Ontario's future economic growth depends largely on the entrepreneurial spirit of its people. At the heart of that spirit is the small business community, which has accounted for the majority of new jobs created over the past decade.

The importance my government attaches to the growth of entrepreneurship can be seen in the priority it has been given by the Premier's Council. The council will soon announce details concerning the establishment of a program of chairs of entrepreneurship for post-secondary institutions.

We will undertake additional measures to promote an atmosphere that is conducive to the dynamic growth of small business, including: promoting entrepreneurial values and awareness in elementary and secondary schools; expanding the small business development corporation program to include firms in business services; reviewing ways to reduce the paperwork burden on small business. The review will be undertaken by the small business advocate.

A competitive economy requires highly skilled workers who are able to adjust to rapidly changing technological demands. Industrial skills are a catalyst for international competitiveness and vital to durable economic growth.

My government will continue to implement a training strategy that: eases the transition of young people into the work force; meets our province's needs for long-term training in the skilled trades; and provides workers with opportunities to upgrade skills and adjust to changing requirements throughout their working lives.

Our goal is to work in partnership with industry, educational institutions and the federal government to create a system of opportunities for lifelong learning.

To support that approach, my government is pleased to announce that a government-wide effort to improve and expand adult literacy programs across Ontario is now in place.

As part of our effort to alleviate shortages in critical skilled trades, my government will renew our apprenticeship system. We will make apprenticeship more attractive to young people through pre-apprenticeship programs and greater use of co-op models. Employers will be encouraged to take on trainees in a range of new occupations requiring one or two years of

training. Steps will be taken to improve participation by women. A loan fund will assist trainees to purchase expensive tools.

Changing technologies have reduced the lifespan of many skills to less than five years. My government will expand its support for the skills upgrading program for journeymen and launch an initiative to provide flexible and rapid upgrading for technologists and technicians in key sectors.

Further steps will be taken to ensure a modern, accessible and responsive training system.

The Futures program, which has provided training for more than 50,000 young people, will be improved to: emphasize training opportunities during work placement; provide access to more employment-disadvantaged youth, and create an enriched back-to-school option.

A "world of work" project will be introduced to provide equal opportunity for francophone students to develop links to industry through apprenticeship positions, co-operative education employment programs and existing work programs.

Funds will be provided to TVOntario to produce programming devoted to basic skills training and upgrading.

Training support will be provided for laid-off older workers.

The dynamic process of responding to new technologies and changing patterns of trade is creating both opportunities and challenges. My government will continue to respond to these challenges in a way that recognizes the needs of the work force.

A caring society must seek to protect the health and safety of its workers. My government will introduce comprehensive health and safety legislation to broaden workers' legal rights. In the interim, significant new resources are being provided to strengthen the enforcement of the existing law.

Legislation to enshrine the right of workers and communities to know about hazardous substances will be reintroduced. This legislation forms part of the national "work place hazardous material information system" agreed to last fall by Canada and the provinces.

Amendments will be introduced to the Employment Standards Act, including the extension of coverage to domestic workers.

My government is committed to protecting workers' pensions against the effects of inflation. We look forward to receiving the report of the working group on inflation protection for pen-

sion plans and to the introduction of timely measures.

Economic conditions throughout this decade have severely tried the financial, physical and human resources of the primary agricultural sector. Changes in market conditions, primary production technologies, demographics and lifestyles have all presented challenges to the industry.

My government will act to meet these challenges and sustain a globally competitive agriculture and food industry.

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The city of Guelph will be reinforced as a world-class centre-of excellence in agriculture and food, linking the best talent from private industry, government and the university sector. As part of this thrust, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will be transferred to Guelph.

Improvements will be made in the farm tax reduction program.

A land stewardship program will be introduced to encourage crop rotation and farm investment in soil and water environmental projects.

Continued assistance will be provided through such programs as the family farm interest rate reduction program and the beginning farmers assistance program.

My government awaits with interest the introduction of tax reform measures by the federal government.

We will ensure that federal and provincial tax systems work in harmony to strengthen our competitive position.

We will continue to strengthen the city of Toronto's status as an international financial centre.

The absence of an adequate supply of quality, affordable child care may be the single greatest obstacle preventing many families from realizing their full economic potential.

Child care is a national need, and my government welcomes a national partnership. We look forward to federal financial leadership and cost-sharing arrangements that will allow the provinces to assume their role in ensuring that quality child care is provided to all who need it.

We recognize the importance of a national framework, and we are awaiting the resolution of a number of outstanding issues that are important to the nature and funding of child-care services.

At the same time, my government is aware of the need for immediate action at the provincial level. Following the tabling of the budget, we will introduce a comprehensive policy that

recognizes child care as a basic public service, not a welfare service.

We will adopt a simple income test to replace the current needs test in determining eligibility for government assistance.

As a top priority, we will significantly increase the supply and range of service, while ensuring that appropriate standards are maintained.

The forthcoming budget will stimulate the development of the nonprofit child care sector by providing direct operating funds for new and existing nonprofit agencies.

We will also provide various incentives to encourage private agencies to convert to nonprofit centres.

Existing private sector agencies will continue to receive support.

My government will promote the development of innovative approaches to child care delivery. Employers will be encouraged to play a greater role in providing child care services.

We will require the provision of child care spaces in all new schools. We will work with municipalities and encourage them to require the provision of child care facilities in new commercial buildings.

The Day Nurseries Act will be reviewed to ensure that child care can be accommodated in a variety of facilities while maintaining high standards of care.

My government will provide funds for the establishment of Canada's first policy research institute on child, youth and family. This multidisciplinary, community-based facility will carry out applied research in areas of public policy. The institute will involve members of the community, social agencies, corporations and government.

If we are to meet our commitment to equal opportunity for all Ontarians, women must be assured of their place as full partners in the economy. My government will intensify its efforts to reach that goal. We will provide greater incentives to encourage public sector institutions to increase opportunities for women.

The pay equity legislation introduced last session will make a historic contribution towards improving the quality of life of working women. With the goodwill of all parties, my government looks forward to the passage this session of this important legislation.

My government is committed to improving the economic development and competitiveness of northern Ontario.

Throughout the past year, a variety of initiatives has been introduced to foster long-term

growth, including support for primary industries and encouragement of economic diversification. As part of a long-term effort, we are in the process of transferring more than 1,200 full-time public service positions to northern Ontario.

Central to our approach is a recognition that the best solutions are home-grown solutions. Nine northern development councils have been created to provide local input and economic leadership.

To further promote local initiatives and self-reliance, my government will establish a northern Ontario heritage fund. The fund will be administered in close consultation with the northern development councils.

Recognizing the vital role that transportation plays in the economic and social life of northern Ontario, increased funding will be directed towards strengthening both the northern Ontario transportation system and linkages with the rest of the province.

We will also support the establishment of research consortia focusing on the application of new technologies to the special needs of northern industries. As a first step, the province will provide one third of the funds to support a consortium that will bring together the Canadian aerospace industry and firms active in the northern resource sector. This initiative will facilitate the adaptation of aerospace technologies to meet the needs of the northern resource sector.

We will promote the use of crown lands for economic development. Pilot projects in selected areas will be the focus of intensified investment for such uses as peat, aquaculture, hydroelectric development, water-based recreation, tourism and cottage development.

Eastern Ontario is also suffering uneven economic growth. My government is consulting widely with eastern Ontario residents to develop a strategy that will take advantage of the region's strengths.

Like all parts of our province, eastern Ontario's greatest strength is its people. To build on that strength, my government will implement several initiatives focused on encouraging entrepreneurship.

An office for eastern Ontario economic development will be established to co-ordinate government assistance to business in the region and improve access to government services and programs.

An eastern Ontario small business network will be created to offer extensive services to local entrepreneurs, including access to professional

advice and assistance in training workers. The network will direct special programs to encourage women and young people to establish their own businesses.

In co-operation with municipal governments, up to 10 self-help offices will be established in eastern Ontario. The centres will provide advice to small businesses in the pre-startup stage.

A new Eastern Ontario Development Corp. office will be opened in Pembroke to improve access to services for businesses in the region's smaller communities.

Funds will be provided for the renewal of municipal roads and provincial highways in eastern Ontario.

To increase the amount of economic activity associated with growing and harvesting wood, my government will extend an existing cost-shared forest management program in eastern Ontario.

My government has taken significant steps to increase public confidence in the integrity and fairness of the democratic process.

We look forward to passage of freedom-of-information-and-privacy legislation this session.

We will continue to proceed swiftly with the implementation of the French Language Services Act, which strengthens rights and opportunities for francophones in this province.

My government will also pursue the passage of legislation that sets out a clear, comprehensive and objective definition of conflict of interest, thereby providing a concise code of conduct for all members of this assembly.

We will continue to ensure that appointees to agencies, boards and commissions reflect all backgrounds and walks of life.

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Access to government goes hand in hand with access to justice. My government is committed to the fundamental principle that all citizens, regardless of their wealth or status, should have equal access to the justice system. Legal rights have meaning only if they can be exercised in a timely fashion.

My government's commitment to equality was reflected in the establishment of the Zuber inquiry to recommend reforms to make the court system more accessible and responsive to the public. We will give timely consideration to his recommendations. In addition, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) will convene a national forum this fall on access to the justice system. This process will produce a concrete and practical blueprint for reform.

Ontario will continue to play a constructive leadership role in building a stronger Canada.

We will actively work to welcome the province of Quebec into the Constitution.

Last month, at the first ministers' conference on aboriginal constitutional matters, my government took part in an effort to achieve self-government for aboriginal people. While that effort did not meet with success, we will work towards self-government agreements with in Ontario.

Ontarians, like all Canadians, took tremendous pride in the great display of national unity and purpose that accompanied Expo 86 in Vancouver. It is in that same spirit that we look forward to the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary.

Ontarians also look forward to a visit this summer by their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York. This occasion will provide us with the opportunity to express the pride we feel in our close and continuing ties to the royal family.

Next month, we will be honoured by the presence of the President of France, François Mitterand.

Ontarians will also take pleasure in hosting a visit by their Imperial Highnesses of Japan, the Prince and Princess Takamado.

Through the leadership and efforts of my ministers, the work of the Legislature and the involvement of the people of Ontario, we will continue to build a better future.

We will revitalize our social, economic and political institutions and make them more accessible to all.

We will modernize and strengthen this province's physical infrastructure—including our schools, hospitals and roads—to make it serve the long-term interests of the people of Ontario.

We will continue to help the people of this province prepare for the 21st century.

May Divine Providence attend your deliberations.

In our sovereign's name I thank you.

God bless the Queen and Canada.

The Honourable the Lieutenant Governor was pleased to retire from the chamber.

Prayers.

Mr. Speaker: I beg to inform the House that to prevent mistakes, I have obtained a copy of His Honour's speech, which I will now read. [Reading dispensed with.]

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

EXECUTION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 1, An Act to amend the Execution Act.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the speech of the

Honourable the Lieutenant Governor to this House be taken into consideration on Wednesday, April 29, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 4:18 p.m.

APPENDIX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(124 members)

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. L. M. Alexander, PC, QC

Speaker: Hon. H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

Allen, R. (Hamilton West NDP)
 Andrewes, P. W. (Lincoln PC)
 Ashe, G. L. (Durham West PC)
 Baetz, R. C. (Ottawa West PC)
 Barlow, W. W. (Cambridge PC)
 Bennett, C. F. (Ottawa South PC)
 Bernier, L. (Kenora PC)
 Bossy, M. L. (Chatham-Kent L)
Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breagh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Bryden, M. H. (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Caplan, Hon. E. (Oriole L)
 Charlton, B. A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, D. R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, J. (Downsview L)
 Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
 Cureatz, S. L. (Durham East PC)
Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
 Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
 Dean, G. H. (Wentworth PC)
Eakins, Hon. J. F., Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Victoria-Haliburton L)
Edighoffer, Hon. H. A., Speaker (Perth L)
Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
 Epp, H. A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, E. L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Ferraro, R. E. (Wellington South L)
 Fish, S. A. (St. George PC)
 Fontaine, R. (Cochrane North L)
 Foulds, J. F. (Port Arthur NDP)
Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
 Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
 Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
 Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
 Grande, T. (Oakwood NDP)

Grandmaître, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Ottawa East L)
 Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
 Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
 Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
 Guindon, L. B. (Cornwall PC)
 Haggerty, R. (Erie L)
 Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, C. E. (York East L)
 Hayes, P. (Essex North NDP)
 Henderson, D. J. (Humber L)
 Hennessy, M. (Fort William PC)
 Jackson, C. (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, J. M. (Wellington-Dufferin-Peel PC)
 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
 Knight, D. S. (Halton-Burlington L)
Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Wilson Heights L)
 Lane, J. G. (Algoma-Manitoulin PC)
 Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
 Leluk, N. G. (York West PC)
 Lupusella, A. (Dovercourt L)
 Mackenzie, R. W. (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mancini, R. (Essex South L)
 Marland, M. (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
 McCaffrey, R. B. (Armourdale PC)
 McCague, G. R. (Dufferin-Simcoe PC)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
 McFadden, D. J. (Eglinton PC)
 McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
 McKessock, R. (Grey L)
 McLean, A. K. (Simcoe East PC)
 McNeil, R. K. (Elgin PC)
 Miller, F. S. (Muskoka PC)
 Miller, G. I. (Haldimand-Norfolk L)
 Mitchell, R. C. (Carleton PC)
 Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of Committee of the Whole House (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, K. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)

Newman, B. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)

O'Connor, T. P. (Oakville PC)

Offer, S. (Mississauga North L)

O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)

Partington, P. (Brock PC)

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)

Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)

Pierce, F. J. (Rainy River PC)

Poirier, J. (Prescott-Russell L)

Pollock, J. (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, C. (Yorkview L)

Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)

Ramsay, D. (Timiskaming L)

Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, D. R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron-Middlesex L)

Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)

Runciman, R. W. (Leeds PC)

Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio (Parkdale L)

Sargent, E. C. (Grey-Bruce L)

Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General (St. David L)

Sheppard, H. N. (Northumberland PC)

Shymko, Y. R. (High Park-Swansea PC)

Smith, D. W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. J. (London South L)

Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (York North L)

South, L. (Frontenac-Addington L)

Stephenson, B. M. (York Mills PC)

Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)

Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)

Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)

Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Taylor, J. A. (Prince Edward-Lennox PC)

Treleven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House (Oxford PC)

Turner, J. M. (Peterborough PC)

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)

Villeneuve, N. (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)

Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)

Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)

Wiseman, D. J. (Lanark PC)

Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)

Yakabuski, P. J. (Renfrew South PC)

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines

Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet

Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services

Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment

Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General

Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food

Eakins, Hon. J. F., Minister of Tourism and Recreation

Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy

O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology

Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services

Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health

Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour

Grandmaitre, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs

Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing

Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communication

Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services

Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture

Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio

Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Bossy, M. L., assistant to the Minister of Housing (Chatham-Kent L)

Cordiano, J., assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Downsview L)

Epp, H. A., assistant to the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue (Waterloo North L)

Ferraro, R. E., assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wellington South L)

Fontaine, R., assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Cochrane North L)

Haggerty, R., assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Erie L)

Hart, C. E., assistant to the Minister of Health (York East L)

Henderson, D. J., assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Humber L)

Knight, D. S., assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet (Halton-Burlington L)

McGuigan, J. F., assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources (Kent-Elgin L)

McKessock, R., assistant to the Solicitor General and the Minister of Correctional Services (Grey L)

Miller, G. I., assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Haldimand-Norfolk L)

Offer, S., assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mississauga North L)

Poirier, J., assistant to the Minister of Energy (Prescott-Russell L)

Polsinelli, C., assistant to the Minister of Labour (Yorkview L)

Ramsay, D., assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Timiskaming L)

Reycraft, D. R., assistant to the Minister of Education (Middlesex L)

Sargent, E. C., assistant to the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Grey-Bruce L)

South, L., assistant to the Minister of the Environment (Frontenac-Addington L)

Ward, C. C., assistant to the Attorney General (Wentworth North L)

*The lists in this appendix, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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No. 2

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Wednesday, April 29, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, April 29, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

RESIGNATION OF MEMBER

Mr. Speaker: I beg to inform the House that during the recess a vacancy occurred in the membership of the House by reason of the resignation of Dennis R. Timbrell, Esq., as member for the electoral district of Don Mills, effective midnight, Saturday, February 28, 1987. Accordingly, I have issued my warrant to the chief election officer for the issue of a writ for a by-election.

LEGISLATIVE PAGES

Mr. Speaker: Also today, I would like all members to join me in welcoming the first spring group of legislative pages to serve in the Third Session of the 33rd Parliament.

They are Melissa Atkin, Essex South; Christopher Bradley, Brampton; Shawn Brunt, Chatham-Kent; Verity Crewe-Nelson, Riverdale; Melissa Follwell, Quinte; Kazimira Ford-Mattes, Bellwoods; Cynthia Gillies, St. David; Michael Guest, Leeds; Mark Haney, Algoma-Manitoulin; Jennifer Heal, Oakwood; Sara Henderson, Wentworth; Mary Ingram, Cambridge; Nicole Kester, Peterborough; Jennifer Kinsey, Carleton-Grenville;

Michael Mitchell, Simcoe Centre; Oliver Moore, St. George; Helene Robertson, Cochrane North; Lee Rovinelli, Nickel Belt; Fizul Sima, Scarborough East; Phillip Stainton, Lakeshore; Fred Steciuk, Huron-Middlesex; Jeremy Valeriote, Oakville; Davidson Veighey, Windsor-Riverside, and Brennan Webb, Muskoka.

Please join me again in welcoming the pages.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. Gillies: I would like to bring to the attention of the House, and particularly to the attention of the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), a regrettable and, I believe, avoidable tragedy which occurred in my riding of Brantford.

Several weeks ago, William Westwater, a 29-year-old, and his girlfriend, Maureen Massicotte, only 25, died from bullet wounds to the

head in a murder-suicide, apparently committed by Mr. Westwater. What makes this episode particularly tragic is the fact that Mr. Westwater, in the weeks before his death, had sought psychiatric help from several sources and had warned people that he was "ready to explode."

Knowing he faced serious problems, Mr. Westwater had himself admitted to the Brantford General Hospital's mental health unit at the beginning of April but left feeling he was not getting any better. Later, accompanied by his family, Mr. Westwater travelled to the St. Thomas Psychiatric Hospital in the hope of finding help. According to friends in published reports, Mr. Westwater told staff at the hospital that he was "thinking about death."

Unfortunately, Mr. Westwater was not admitted to the facility, from what we have been able to determine, because he resided in a location outside the catchment area for the hospital. In fact, while at St. Thomas, Mr. Westwater was given a brochure describing programs, not in another provincial hospital, but in a mental health and addiction rehabilitation facility in Buffalo, New York.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired. I am sorry.

Mr. Gillies: I ask the Minister of Health to undertake an urgent review of the admitting policies of these institutions.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S COMMENTS

Mr. Foulds: The Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) has profoundly insulted all northern residents with his recent statements on the drinking and driving habits of northerners. I rise, both in sorrow and in anger, to protest.

Let us admit that the Ontario Provincial Police's statistics are disturbing. The rate of impaired driving in the north is three times higher than in the south. There are many complex reasons for this, not the least of which is a simple lack of public transit.

I quote from the Canadian Press story: "Solicitor General Ken Keyes blamed the higher rate in the north in part on tougher economic times and high unemployment in the region. 'It leaves people more time to drink and the region

has fewer attractions to keep them busy,' he told reporters."

The Toronto Sun worded it this way: "Keyes said then that many northerners are unemployed and spend more time drinking and driving because they have less to keep them busy."

The Solicitor General has not withdrawn or apologized or clarified his remarks. This kind of flippant, superficial analysis of a serious social and economic problem in northern Ontario is not worthy of a serious cabinet minister about a serious problem.

I call on the minister to apologize and withdraw his remarks. If not, I ask the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to relieve him of his sensitive responsibilities, which have proved too great for him, not for the first time. The government has taken no action to relieve the profound social problems caused by the tough economic times in the north—

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Foulds: —and the Solicitor General's remarks do not help.

DR. GEORGE BALKOS

Ms. Hart: I rise sadly today, as it is the first opportunity I have had, to mark the passing of a friend and a man who was perhaps the best loved in the Greek community in York East, Dr. George Balkos.

George came to Canada in 1969 and worked at various menial jobs until he learned English well enough to attend the University of Toronto medical school. He is a post-graduate in medical ethics and very active in the Greek community. He was on the board of the Ontario Cancer Treatment and Research Foundation, served as a councilman in the Hellenic Canadian Congress, was a founding member of the Hippocratic Medical Society and belonged to the Hellenic Canadian Professional and Business Association.

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Dr. Balkos was well known in his community because he always went out of his way for the little person. He was a general practitioner on the Danforth and there was no elderly lady who came to him who was not given the time she needed in order to have her problems looked after.

I would like to express my sympathy and that of many of my constituents to Dr. Balkos's family, and to say to this House that George Balkos's fondest wish was that he would one day represent his people in the Legislature of Ontario. Unfortunately, that wish did not come

to pass and it is my hope that one day his daughter or his son will sit here among us.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Davis: Public transit in the Metro Toronto area was completely ignored in yesterday's speech from the throne. The proposal for a Sheppard Avenue line that was approved by Metro council last year was obviously not deemed important enough to be included.

I remind the government and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) that 25 per cent of Metro Toronto's future employment will be in the North York and Scarborough city centres. More than 100,000 people cross the Scarborough-North York boundary at Sheppard and Finch Avenue in buses or private vehicles each day. The road network cannot be improved to handle all this load adequately without the expansion of the subway system. The Sheppard line is Metro's number one subway priority.

The government has not given a clear direction of its plans in this crucial area of public transportation. With time ticking away, how long will this government continue its policy of indecision before giving the commuters outside Metro and the travellers who are currently using crowded buses a sign of its intentions?

ARMENIAN MEMORIAL DAY

Ms. Caplan: I stand today to mark the anniversary of Armenian Memorial Day as proclaimed by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) on April 24, 1986. The date was proclaimed so that we would not forget the atrocity of the Armenian genocide which began on April 24, 1915. More than 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were forced from their homes, marched across deserts and slaughtered. Two thirds of the entire Armenian population perished between 1915 and 1917.

The survivors of this massacre sought refuge in countries around the world. A large number attempted to rebuild their lives in Ontario. In my riding of Oriole, the Armenian population has made a valuable contribution to the community.

I support the resolution passed in this House in 1980 requesting the government of Canada to recognize and condemn officially the atrocities committed by the government of Turkey and to designate April 24 as a day of remembrance for the Armenian community.

The events of 1915 seem very far away for those of us who are living in a country where fundamental rights and freedoms are taken for granted, but the Armenian tragedy is not an

isolated incident. Fewer than 25 years later, Adolf Hitler carried out his plan to exterminate the Jewish population. We must remember these painful events so that we can learn from our past and work to fight injustice around the world.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRES

Mr. Sterling: This morning, a colleague of mine and I met with the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. The rape crisis coalition is a group of volunteers who run 17 different rape crisis centres across this province. I want to indicate to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) that they are extremely upset with the treatment they have received from his government.

On March 13, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) made an announcement that he was going to fund rape crisis centres across this province. He gave no previous indication of that announcement to the rape crisis coalition nor consulted with it. The Solicitor General indicated to this particular coalition that he was doing an evaluation of its organization. There has been no attempt to contact them to tell them the results of that evaluation.

The rape crisis coalition has been in existence for seven years. It thinks the government is trying to put it out of business. This party supports what it has done in the past and will support what it does in the future. If the Premier and his Solicitor General think they are going to put them out of business by ignoring them, they are wrong.

ARMENIAN MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. Warner: The Armenian Memorial Day is something this House took seriously and has taken seriously. Unfortunately, the federal government has chosen to ignore its own promise that it made to the Armenian community and to this country in 1984 during the election.

It should be unacceptable to this province simply to allow the Conservative government in Ottawa to renege on its promise. In fact, our voice should be even stronger that Turkey owes an apology to the Armenian community and that a remembrance day should be expressed and recognized across this country and that the lands should be returned to the Armenian people. I call on the government so to do.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

EDUCATION FUNDING

Hon. Mr. Conway: Yesterday's speech from the throne outlined a number of initiatives this government is planning to undertake to enhance Ontario's education system. While we can be

proud of education in this province, it is important that we continue to make improvements where and when necessary.

M. le Président, il importe que nous accordions une attention particulière à la question des subventions d'immobilisation.

In considering capital funds, it is important to remember the size of the education system in Ontario. There are approximately 4,600 elementary and secondary schools in this province, with an approximate replacement value of more than \$13 billion.

We must ensure that our school system's buildings, related facilities and equipment are as modern and as well maintained as possible.

It is also important for us to remember that our schools are not only for our students but also play an increasingly important role as a community resource that all can and do use.

Of course, no two schools are alike and no two regions of this province are the same. There are a number of growth areas in Ontario that demand special attention. Population shifts have placed an unusual burden on these areas and it is important that this be recognized.

Over the past three years, the four largest growth areas—Durham, York, Carleton and Dufferin-Peel—have seen total enrolments increase by approximately 37,000 students and it is expected that a further 31,000 students will swell the ranks in these regions in the next two years. These needs and the needs of all students must be met.

This government has recognized the importance of capital funding in improving educational facilities and, ultimately, the quality of education our students receive. Between 1985 and 1987, this government, under the leadership of the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), has more than doubled the annual capital allocation to school boards. This is proof of the commitment of this government to the importance and priority we place upon education.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Question period will follow.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

1350

Hon. Mr. Conway: As further proof, I am pleased to announce today the allocation of \$226.4 million for capital projects in the 1988-89 fiscal year, more than triple the 1985 allocation of \$73.2 million. When local school boards add

their contributions, we will be generating a total capital program of \$293 million.

Of the government's share of that total, about 79 per cent, or \$179 million, is designated for new construction. We are creating approximately 37,000 new pupil places in Ontario and are funding 360 projects for 114 school boards. A further \$45 million, or 20 per cent of the total, is designated for renovations and alterations and the remainder of the allocation will be for other projects.

I think it is important to recognize that approximately \$144 million of the 1988-89 government allocation will be spent in the four growth regions I mentioned previously: York, Durham, Carleton and Dufferin-Peel.

Although the majority of funds designated for 1988-89 will go to new construction, we also recognize that many boards have serious and pressing needs to update and renovate existing schools. The funding I have announced today will help alleviate many of those problems and my ministry will continue to address this need as a priority concern.

The specific allocations for individual boards will be announced later this week and the process for determining which projects receive money has been as follows: school boards ranked their needs in order of priority, the ministry's regional offices then ranked them on a regional basis, then the ministry ranked them on a province-wide basis.

I can assure all members of this assembly that we have done everything possible to ensure that all boards receive the necessary funds. While we have made tremendous progress in meeting the capital needs of our education system, and I repeat that this allocation for 1988-89 triples the allocation of 1985, we do realize that more needs to be done. The Ontario Ministry of Education is therefore considering a variety of alternative ways to provide for capital funding needs in co-operation with the Provincial Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), who has been instrumental in so improving the capital requirements of our Ontario youth.

It is often difficult to put a price tag on something as important and valuable as the education of our young people.

Nous devons tous faire sans cesse notre possible pour offrir à nos élèves la meilleure éducation qui soit.

I believe that with today's announcement on funding we have made new, important and positive strides towards achieving that goal of excellence in education that is so important for

this government and for this province and its future.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As the members heard in the speech from the throne yesterday, the Ontario government has a firm commitment to offer community living alternatives to developmentally handicapped people now residing in Ontario's nursing homes.

To quote from the speech, "We will develop a system of flexible community-based programs and services that...will respect the dignity, independence and unique needs of each individual."

During this session of the Legislature, I shall be announcing details of a comprehensive, long-term plan designed to provide community-living options for developmentally handicapped people in Ontario, no matter where they are living at the moment.

Today, I want to tell members of the House about a very important component of that plan. This step will lead to community-living alternatives during the next year for 130 developmentally handicapped people now in nursing homes. This part of the plan has been made possible through the co-operative attitudes and joint agreement between my ministry and the Ministry of Health.

Through this effective collaboration, my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and I are pleased to announce that responsibility for services for developmentally handicapped people now living in nursing homes is being transferred from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. I know it gives both of us and both our ministries considerable satisfaction to take this course of action.

My ministry will start immediately to arrange for these particular nursing home residents to move into community-based living and day programs, a movement that will continue through the next years. My ministry has earmarked \$5 million to develop the necessary community resources during the first year of the program, 1987-88.

We in my ministry have a particular responsibility towards the people who will move during this first year.

In the spring of 1986, I undertook negotiations intended to achieve community living for developmentally handicapped people in nursing and residential homes. At that time, the government made a special commitment to the children. My

priority for the next year is to move these children into community settings.

I mentioned earlier the transfer of 130 people from nursing homes during the first year. This number includes all of the 53 children under 18. It also includes 19 young people between the ages of 18 and 21, and an additional 58 adults.

In conclusion, I would like to remind members that \$9.3 million is currently being spent through the triministry program for developmentally handicapped people in nursing homes. The triministry program was set up by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community and Social Services to provide developmental activities.

I want to state our additional commitment that this program will be continued for the other clients of my ministry who are, for the time being, to remain in their present nursing home settings until they move into an appropriate community-living situation.

I look forward to sharing with the House in the days ahead other details of the plan to move developmentally handicapped adults out of institutions and back into the mainstream of society.

DOWNSVIEW REHABILITATION CENTRE

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Last December 11, I appointed an external team to conduct a general review of the role of the Downsview hospital and rehabilitation centre of the Workers' Compensation Board and the centre's administration, programs and systems for protecting patients' rights. On Monday afternoon, the Downsview review team transmitted its report to me and, at this first opportunity, I am tabling the report in the Legislature.

As honourable members will see, the report's recommendations are far-reaching. I will be studying them in the coming days and discussing them with my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and with the chairman of the WCB, Dr. Elgie. It is important that any actions to be taken recognize, in the most sensitive way, the current employees of the centre.

The members of the Downsview review team are John J. Corrigan of Inco Ltd. in Sudbury, Dean Ralph Garber of the University of Toronto's faculty of social work, Angelo Persichilli of CFMT, Channel 47 in Toronto, and Edward Thornton of Local 183 of the Labourers' International Union in Toronto.

I would like to thank them and, as well, the chairman of the review team, W. Vickery Stoughton, president of the Toronto Hospital, for their promptness and thoroughness. Their work

will play an important part in ensuring that there is in Ontario a provincial centre of excellence, as well as effective capacity at the local level, for the medical and physical rehabilitation of workers who are injured on the job.

1400

RESPONSES

DOWNSVIEW REHABILITATION CENTRE

Mr. Gordon: I would like to respond to the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) and to the report he has tabled for us in the House—

Mr. Andrewes: Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye).

Mr. Gordon: The Minister of Labour I should say, pardon me; although I would imagine that he is going to be talking to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) quite closely in the coming months. To decentralize the services to injured workers across this province in a humane way and in a way that will mean they will be rehabilitated as quickly as possible is going to require the pulling together of resources in various ministries.

I see the minister is going to be seeing that acute care treatment is going to take place in municipalities such as the Sudbury region, and I applaud him for talking about decentralization. At the same time, I want to remind the minister that we have a real, dire need for more acute care beds in the Sudbury region and the very limited number of beds that the Minister of Health announced just a short while ago, which just met the need as of 1981, is going to create some real problems when he goes to put injured workers into the major hospitals in the Sudbury region.

I would encourage the Minister of Labour to consult very closely with the Minister of Health with regard to the issue of acute care beds as it affects injured workers. At the same time, though, I must say to the minister that he has been the Minister of Labour for two years now, and it seems a shame that it took two years and a hint of scandal in order to get him to move on a subject that has concerned injured workers for years.

It has been a well-known fact among the general population as well as among the injured workers that the Downsview facility was just not working for workers and that they viewed the facility as one that was oppressive and one that did not really add to getting them back on their feet.

The key to rehabilitating workers is to do it as quickly as possible and as close to their homes as possible. This, of course, calls for decentraliza-

tion. I urge the minister to get on with it and not to wait for the next crisis to carry on as he has.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Davis: I can see that the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) still likes to play and to make great announcements with no substance. We see that there are \$80 million more in new dollars coming to the school boards. The interesting thing is that the school boards asked for more than \$1 billion to meet their needs, and the \$80 million extra that this government is prepared to give will just meet the needs of the York Region Board of Education.

I find it interesting that in 1986-87 there was a shortfall of \$357 million in capital grants for education and that this year there will be a shortfall of \$775 million. The government has indicated its emphasis on science but it is going to give only \$45 million for renovations and alterations. We find that across this province, \$72 million is required to upgrade science laboratories and libraries, and that does not even begin to meet the requirements of education in this province.

This government has the money to deal adequately and to give \$800 million to \$1 billion now to meet the needs of education in this province, and if the Premier (Mr. Peterson) is committed to education, as he said he is, that will be the top and only priority in his spending.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: When the Minister of Education outlined the process he went through in bringing forward this announcement, I think he left out a step: the step where the Premier's office told him, "If we are going in June, we will announce it now, and if we are going in the fall, we will announce it in August against a big red back-drop." The point is, as my colleague has pointed out, the minister is not coming near to meeting the capital requirements as expressed to him by the school boards across the province.

Furthermore, in terms of overall education spending, the minister will recall the commitment made by his leader, when running for the office he now holds, to return the provincial share of educational spending in this province to 60 per cent. The day he took office, education was funded 48 per cent by the province of Ontario. It is now funded 44 per cent by Ontario, and that is his responsibility and his shortfall.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

DOWNSVIEW REHABILITATION CENTRE

Mr. McClellan: I rise to respond to the statement of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) on the Downsview rehabilitation centre.

First of all, I think many people were very surprised at not hearing one single reference to injured workers or reform of the Workers' Compensation Board in yesterday's throne speech. So much for promises from the Liberal Party of Ontario to reform the WCB.

Since October 1986, the Minister of Labour has appointed four separate task forces to study one single problem, the Downsview rehabilitation centre of the WCB. He appointed the director of the centre, Dr. Kummel, to study its problems. He requested the police to do an investigation of problems at the DRC. He appointed the Majesky task force to study chaos within rehabilitation services of the WCB, and he appointed the Stoughton review team, whose report has been released here this afternoon.

The minister himself has nothing to say about the Stoughton review team in his speech to the House, nothing to say about it at all, and I am not surprised because the report is a complete condemnation of the inadequacy of the services of the DRC which starts by saying the DRC is characterized by an overall lack of focus and direction.

We hope this Minister of Labour will be replaced and the government will put somebody in charge of the Ministry of Labour who is capable and competent of reforming the WCB and the administration of health and safety across this province, because the incumbent is simply incapable of doing so.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I rise to respond to the participation of the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) in the scattergun approach of the Liberal government to distributing its unexpected largess.

It is a reannouncement of the commitment by this government a year ago to get the kids who are developmentally handicapped out of homes for special care. That is all it is, except that he has added an extra 50 people.

We should understand the circumstances. There are over 1,900 developmentally handicapped people in homes for special care who should not be there who have been there for far too long. There are a further 500 people who are in residential homes whom this will not affect at all.

He is spending \$5 million for these 130 people. That is an appropriate amount of money, in my view, but he admits in his own document that he is spending \$9.3 million on the other 1,900 people who are being left behind. That is intolerable. He should not get up and praise himself for this kind of initiative at this time, when he has so much money and a possibility of helping these people in desperate straits.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Allen: I rise to respond to the announcement by the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) of capital grants, new money, renovations and alterations, capital money for the school system abroad in this province.

He is certainly right to point out the shortage that exists out there in many of the school districts and not just in the four major targeted areas. The shortfall is great and the need is great, as the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario and the trustees have told us repeatedly in their active lobbies this past year.

I want to remind him, like my colleague from the Tory party, of course, that in point of fact the identified need by the school boards in terms of new capital grants does amount, at a minimum, to twice the amount he has allocated and then a bit more.

I would not want to suggest, like my colleague from the Tory party, however, that it would be possible for the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) to use his windfall gains to meet the total of \$1 billion of new capital and renovations needs in this system, then to spend it again for moving up to the 60 per cent level, then to follow some of his colleagues in spending it in two or three other ways, and then advising that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) also give a tax rebate of a similar amount. Obviously, it is important for us to deal with those moneys realistically.

There are two items I did miss in this statement. I thought I heard in the Premier's speech, delivered by the Lieutenant Governor yesterday, a commitment that every single new capital expenditure on a new facility would include a day care facility. I missed that in this commitment. Are we already moving back from the commitments of yesterday?

Second, I think many of us have suggested it would be wise for this government to initiate a formula for renovations and maintenance for the system as a whole so we do not get into this spending-nonspending pattern. Let us do it regularly and systematically and maintain the

system the way it should be on a regular basis and in a businesslike fashion.

1410

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Grossman: My first question is for the Premier in the light of the fact that he has been obliged over the last little while to correct, shall we say, the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) on a number of matters. We should like to ascertain today the degree to which he is going to back up the minister in the auto insurance area.

The minister indicated last week that he believed steps should be taken to ensure that in the new mechanism, auto insurance companies were allowed a margin of profit. Does the Premier support him in that statement?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that question to the minister.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The Leader of the Opposition has stated publicly that he is absolutely and unalterably opposed to a government-run insurance plan. If he says that, then I assume it is a given that he wants it to remain in the private sector. If it remains in the private sector, surely no responsible person would expect people to invest money and run this operation in an altruistic way where they do not make any money. The problem is where there are inequities, discrepancies and people are being ill served. This rate review board will see to it that this is rectified.

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier, I will ask a supplementary question of the Minister of Financial Institutions. I heard the minister repeat that insurance companies should be allowed a margin of profit on their auto business. On January 26 in this House he said that "insurance companies still pay out more in claims than they take in as premiums."

Given that statement, given his acknowledgment that insurance companies apparently are losing money on auto insurance right now and given his just-repeated statement that they ought to be allowed a margin of profit—last week the minister speculated maybe three per cent—does that not imply that if they are allowed by the minister to get that margin of profit, insurance rates will go up thanks to what he did last week?

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: If I can have the attention of the members of the House, I will explain how the insurance industry works. The leader of the

third party has constantly extolled the fact that the insurance industry is making billions of dollars, so as a result there is money there, there is no necessity for them to lose money.

What happens is that auto insurance is one segment of the insurance business. They make money on carrying their overhead and allotting a certain proportion of their operation. They have the opportunity and they have it right now: if the insurance companies are complaining that they are losing money, there is no one compelling them to stay in it.

Obviously, there is more to it than what happens in the underwriting. What we are going to do is make sure that they are treated equitably and that the consumers are protected. Where the major problem is in insurance in Ontario is the fact that there are people who are being arbitrarily rated. There are premiums being charged where another company will charge 100 per cent less. That is what we are going to rectify.

Mr. Grossman: We knew the minister was not prepared when he had the press conference last Thursday, but still to be unprepared when the House meets; it is beyond even our imagination that he would be that disorganized. Let us try to figure out what it is the minister just said and what he said last week. The consumers of this province thought for a fleeting moment last Thursday that their rates might not go up. Does the minister believe the auto insurance companies are making a profit; and if so, how much are they currently making? The minister surely has that information by this date. Are they making a profit and how much?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I do not have that information. What we are addressing are the inequities. We have information about that. We have the horror stories that come to us on a regular basis. We have someone saying: "I have applied for insurance and my rate is X. I have gone to another company and my rate is half X." We know that. What we have said is we are setting up an independent permanent review board. That independent permanent review board will determine whether the insurance companies are justified in their rates. If they are not, they can roll them back and do whatever they have to do, but that is what we are doing. The idea of the cap is to make sure that in the interim the rates do not go up any higher.

Mr. Grossman: I wonder if the Premier might tell this House how much he believes the auto insurance companies are making in this province off the backs of consumers. He surely knows that.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer the insurance question to the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter).

Mr. Speaker: That question is referred to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: We do not know that information. The industry has called for an audit and we have said that is exactly the function of the independent permanent rate review board. It will look into the figures. It will do an audit to determine that figure.

Mr. Grossman: If the review board proposed by this party a week and a half before the minister suddenly adopted it at the height of this emergency establishes unequivocally that the auto insurance companies under any definition at all are losing money, is the minister going to instruct the rate review board to raise the rates to consumers to allow those companies a return on investment and a margin of profit?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member should know that the industry is a competitive one. It is a free enterprise one. When we have a rate review board, what it will do is it will set the maximum. The marketplace will set the rate within that maximum. There is no compulsion on the part of the industry to go to the maximum or to do that. The marketplace will work. There are over 200 insurance companies actively competing in the auto insurance business.

Mr. Grossman: This week the minister is back to the marketplace. Last week he was freezing the insurance rates. I hope the House is here for another few weeks to see the next several positions.

The consumers of this province want to know if last week's statement was an indication that this government is going to ensure that their auto insurance premiums do not go up but are "capped," to use the minister's word. In order for them to know that, they need a statement from the minister clearly saying that if the rate review board discovers insurance companies are not making a profit, he will or will not—the minister can take his choice—allow the cap to be raised to allow the insurance companies to make the return on investment which he said last week they ought to be making. Would he allow the cap to be raised to accommodate that or would he not?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: That would be up to the independent review board. That is its function. That is absolutely its function.

Mr. Grossman: Oh, no. Last week the minister said he would allow them a return on investment.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: That will be part of the criteria, but that is exactly the same rate review board that the Leader of the Opposition endorsed and it is the same rate review board that the leader of the third party endorsed.

1420

Mr. Rae: This is too good not to continue with the explanation of the government's policy. Just today, I got a call in my office from a young driver from Mississauga, 20 years old, with a completely clean driving record. He has a 1981 Capri. He had received a notice for renewing his insurance on the day that the minister made his announcement, and his rate had jumped by \$500 a year. This was on top of the \$1,600 he was already paying.

This young man heard the minister's announcement talking about the cap and then heard the various media reports talking about the freeze. He thought he was in luck. Then he made the mistake of phoning the minister's office. He asked them whether the 10 per cent rollback which the minister had ordered that day would apply to his \$1,600 and he only needed to send in \$1,440 to the insurance company because his rates had been capped and because he had, in addition, the rollback. That is what this young man thought.

Can the minister explain why if there is a cap and there is a rollback, young Ken Meagher is spending \$2,100 this year instead of \$1,440, which is the Monte Kwinter discount rate he thought he would be paying?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I missed the key part of the member's explanation, but just so he will understand, on April 23 the rates in the groups—that is how insurance companies rate their people—were frozen. If a young man had a rate a year before and it came up for renewal, his effective rate would be the rate as of April 23, not what it was a year before, and the 10 per cent would reflect on that.

I do not know whether that came through. Is the extra \$500 the increase over the year before? The cap takes place April 23.

Mr. Rae: We call that bait and switch where I come from.

Can the minister confirm the statements that have been made by Mr. Weir, which have been quoted and which he has also made in conversations with the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart), who unfortunately cannot be here today, that the government is allowing a two per cent rate increase per month up until April? This means that if you renew in April, or indeed in May, a 22 per cent increase is going to be

allowed, 20 per cent in June, 18 per cent in July and so on. Can the minister confirm that this is what is taking place, that there is no freeze, that there is no real cap and that rate increases are still being allowed by the government, even as the minister was giving his statement last Thursday?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The answer is the same answer I gave before. As of April 23, what we did was put a freeze on all categories, not on all insurance across the province. Every category was frozen. The reason for that was so the companies could not jack up the rates pending the rate review board. If someone renews his insurance after not having had it for a year, then there is a formula to make sure he does not get gouged that way, but it is effective as of April 23.

Mr. Rae: Can the minister confirm that if you were an average driver paying \$605, your new rate in April 1987 would be \$750, and that if you take that average increase of 24 per cent, you would have an increase to \$738 in May 1987, to \$726 in June 1987, to \$714 in July 1987, to \$702 in August 1987 and so on down the line? The minister has not frozen a damned thing, and the public out there knows it.

Can the minister confirm that if he averages that across the province he is looking at rate increases of up to \$400 million at the same time as he is parroting that he is protecting the consumer? He is not protecting the consumer; he is protecting the Liberal Party's backside as a get-ready for an election, and that is all he is doing.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The leader of the third party has said that if he brought in his government-owned auto insurance plan he would reduce insurance by 25 per cent. I suggest he has already done it by getting the right figures. He has stated that the average was \$605 when he knows—and he had to fire someone because he used that figure but he has not learned the number—it is \$448.

To get to his question, the answer is this: what we have done is put on a cap; that does not mean it has to go to that. There is a cap and there is a formula to make sure the people of Ontario are well served.

Mr. Mackenzie: Hide from the question.

Mr. McClellan: Show me somebody who has \$448.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Sudbury East would like your attention.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. It is my understanding that during the

recess the minister toured the province talking to union officials in a variety of communities, indicating he did not want any hearings on the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

In a brown envelope which I received yesterday, a copy of a letter signed by Dr. D. R. McCalla, the chairman of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety, says the following: "That the Minister of Labour take the steps necessary to provide a public forum for all interested parties to debate the premises underlying the act and its enforcement and to consider alternative structures."

In view of this recommendation from the minister's advisory council and the call for public hearings by a wide spectrum of the trade union movement, why is the minister trying to keep the lid on that Pandora's box and on cleaning up the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which is so desperately needed in this province?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: During the time when the House has been in recess, I have certainly enjoyed the opportunity to have discussions with the leadership of organized labour, with most of the major trade union leaders in the province; some of them brought a number of officials with them. I also enjoyed the opportunity to meet with the leadership of a good number of the labour councils, including most recently the Chatham and District Labour Council on Monday this week. The views they have expressed to me have been very useful.

As well, my officials are continuing to have ongoing consultations and discussions with both business and labour on the draft amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, which I shared with the House just before we adjourned in February.

I expect that in the not-too-distant future we will be able to move forward and bring forward amendments to the House. Obviously, as that debate goes forward, the will of the House will prevail. If there are to be discussions on those amendments as they come forward—and I certainly welcome them in committee—I would be prepared to play a role in those discussions.

Mr. Martel: It is interesting that he did not answer the question. Let me quote Dr. McCalla, the chairman of the minister's advisory council. He says, "The promise of an improvement in the future wellbeing of workers implied in the royal commission report has, for the most part, gone unfulfilled."

He goes on to say: "Although there may be some room for debate about the conclusion to be drawn from the data, it is clear from the survey

that the committee system, as established under the act, is not adequate. Furthermore, there is no consensus that the internal responsibility system is functioning effectively or that, alone, it can realistically be expected to act as an instrument for change."

That is McCalla, one month prior to the minister taking his little tour, saying the system does not work. Since the minister and his phoney McKenzie-Laskin report appear to be the only ones who think tinkering with the present system will protect workers, as evidenced by his draft legislation—

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Martel: —will he scrap that hunk of junk he presented three months ago and accept the request of his advisory committee that a public forum be established and let that public forum be the standing committee on resources development, which is looking at Bill 149?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If my friend the member for Sudbury East believes the very far-reaching proposals contained in the draft amendments, some of which actually agree with the proposals in Bill 149, represent a hunk of junk, he must be one of the few people in Ontario who does so. The views I have heard in the past two months—and they have come often, I say to my friend, from the front-line people on both the business side and the labour side—are that while we may disagree with individual proposals, while we may feel that some ought to go a little further or not as far as we have proposed, for the most part, those proposals will do great things to enhance the kind of system that will lead to effective occupational health and safety in the work place.

Finally, with that, I know my friend would want to acknowledge the much more rigorous enforcement of the ministry and the fact that enforcement has led to much tougher prosecutions under the act.

1430

Mr. Martel: My friend the minister is talking to different trade union people than I am.

Here is the minister's own advisory council. They go on to say in their report to the minister, requesting hearings: "Considerable frustration has been experienced by both labour and management in trying to obtain from the Ministry of Labour information and interpretation of what is required. Frustration with the ministry has now escalated to a point where a polarization atmosphere pervades the whole occupational health and safety scene, just as it did in the period

leading up to the formation of the Ham royal commission 10 years ago."

Who is the minister trying to kid? For almost 10 years—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Was that your question?

Mr. Martel: No, it was not my question.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the member have a question?

Mr. Martel: Yes, I have a question.

The internal responsibility system is not working. Is the minister prepared to bring in an act, after hearings, which in fact will give workers some power and not merely a consultative role as they currently have under a stinking system that does not work? The minister's whole advisory committee says the same thing.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: One of the amazing things about all my discussions was just how few people agreed with some of the central premises of Bill 149, which went to such extreme measures.

Let me simply indicate to my friend that, having talked about how the internal responsibility system does not work, having spoken in that way for so long, he now professes to be surprised that there is a degree of polarization out there. We acknowledge there is polarization. It has been around for a very long time. My friend has acknowledged it. We are trying to reduce it, and I believe we are.

SOLICITOR GENERAL'S COMMENTS

Mr. Harris: I have a question of the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. The Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) says, impaired driving rates are three times higher in northern Ontario because economic conditions leave people more time to drink and because the region has fewer attractions to keep them busy.

As the minister and the Premier, does he agree with his Solicitor General's view that northerners have nothing better to do than to drink and drive?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I would not put it in those terms at all. Obviously, we have a problem. We have a problem in many regions of the province. The statistics are worse in northern Ontario, as I understand them, and I am not an expert on this. Perhaps the Solicitor General was trying to provide some explanation.

Obviously, our concern is to provide equal economic opportunity in northern Ontario, and I am sure my honourable friend would agree we have taken a number of initiatives in that regard. If, in fact, that is the cause—and I am not a sociologist; I cannot give a logical, definitive

explanation on that—then very clearly we are trying to address some of those fundamental economic problems to create equal opportunity.

Mr. Harris: This is the Premier's opportunity either to agree with the Solicitor General or dissociate himself from the type of stupid statements he is making about northern Ontario. The Ontario Provincial Police disagree with the government, disagree with the Solicitor General and, I assume, disagree with the Premier, unless I hear otherwise. In fact, they say the typical driver is employed.

Perhaps if the Premier agrees with it, he could table any information and statistics he has to support the type of stupid statements that are being made by the Solicitor General.

This is three times. I would ask the Premier a simple question: does he dissociate himself from those remarks or not?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not sure the honourable minister was trying to do anything more than perhaps give some definition. Perhaps he is right, perhaps he is wrong. If the member has any questions, then please ask them of the Solicitor General. My honourable friend would perhaps like to draw a personal slight out of this situation. I am sure there was none intended in that particular regard.

Obviously, we look at social and economic problems as they exist across the province and try to deal with them as best as we possibly can. If his explanation is wrong, then the member should put his point to the Solicitor General.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions concerning the plight of the employees of Goodyear Canada in my riding. Five hundred of those employees will walk out of that plant on Friday for the last time and the rest will be gone by the end of May. The minister knows full well that up to 300 of those employees will not be eligible for pensions under the current legislation; if the new pension reforms are in place they will be eligible. What assurance can the minister give this House that the provisions of Bill 170 will apply to the employees of Goodyear Canada?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I thank the honourable member for the question. I really appreciate the concern she has. I have the same concern. I cannot give her any assurance because Bill 170 will be coming—we do not know, but we assume it will be coming—to either committee for clause-by-clause debate or to the House for committee of the whole, but if it were to be

included in the bill it would have to be included as a specific exemption. That is something that will be in the power of this House to do.

I am very concerned about their plight. The officials at the Pension Commission of Ontario have met with me as recently as this morning on that issue. It is something we are going to have to address in some way.

Mrs. Grier: The minister can be assured that we on this side of the House will support whatever scheduling is required to bring that bill before this House so that it can be dealt with before May 31. The timing is in the hands of the government. What I would like to know definitively from the minister is if, for some reason or some obstructionism by some party other than this one, the bill is not in place by May 31, will the minister be prepared to make those sections of it that would make the difference for the Goodyear employees retroactive to before May 31?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that her own House leader is the chief critic on pensions and was the chief spokesman for her party at the committee hearings. He has a very important role to play in seeing that it gets scheduled, and that is something we are working on.

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: Tomorrow, on Ontario's behalf, the Premier will be attending the very important constitutional discussions at Meech Lake. Our party believes it would be a serious mistake for Ontario to support a veto clause for Quebec or Ontario. Can he give an assurance to this House today that tomorrow he will not, in fact, endorse a veto for Quebec?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am interested in knowing the honourable member's position, which I gather he has just recently adopted. I remember a former Attorney General, Roy McMurtry, having a different view on this subject. I think my memory serves me well in that regard. As the member knows, he and other members of his party were considered extremely important in the last constitutional go-around in building a stronger Canada.

Let me talk about the veto issue for a moment. It is more complicated than I think the member would want to put forward in the simple question he put. It is a question of a veto over what? As he knows, it is a discussion about a regional veto. It is not a special veto for Quebec particularly. It is one that does not apply to Ontario or possibly other regions.

The latest federal proposal, as he knows, was seven provinces and 80 per cent of the population, which in effect is not a special situation for Quebec. It includes Ontario and it includes certain other combinations of provinces. There have been other suggestions put forward, as my honourable friend will know. Seven and 75 per cent was put forward by Premier Bourassa some time ago, as well as—

Mr. Stevenson: The Premier cannot stand aside and throw grenades on this one.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say to my honourable friend, there is a serious issue at stake here. I do not think—

Mr. Stevenson: We would like to know what the Premier is thinking.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: If the member will stop yapping for a moment, we can share that with him.

Mr. Stevenson: The Premier should stop yapping and answer the question.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think I am explaining this thing as best I can in the circumstances. Another potential solution is the Victoria formula that was adopted and then rejected back in 1971. I cannot tell the member the results of that at the moment.

I go into that discussion tomorrow with a very generous and open mind. I am anxious to get Quebec to be part of our Constitution. I think it is very much in the national interest to do so. I believe the time is ripe and I am hoping there is the foundation there for an agreement.

There are lots of different views on this subject, but I think we have the possibility for the makings of a deal and I go with that particular regard. It still requires some flexibility, obviously.

1440

Mr. Grossman: The Premier talks appropriately about building a country. Two weeks ago when he was out west he seemed to be sympathizing with the western desire to have more equal representation in all of the national talks. That western concern is quite evident. They would object quite seriously if nine of the provinces thought there was an important amendment which might help the western circumstance in this country and if they saw that Quebec had a single veto. He may call it a regional veto; he may say that Quebec is a region, Ontario is a region, as are the Maritimes and western Canada, but if Quebec had that special veto, then I think there are many in western Canada who might

endorse his phrase which he uses with regard to other issues.

He has said that government is not a clearinghouse for special-interest groups. I think many people out west, and many Ontarians, might also believe that Canada is not a clearinghouse for special interests either, that Canada is either a family or it is not. It is for that reason that Ontarians, and our party in particular, seek to know not how complex this issue is—because, with respect, people on this side of the House have been grappling with that issue for a long time—

Mr. Speaker: Do you have a question?

Mr. Grossman: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Our question is a very simple one. Is the Premier, as he goes to the meetings tomorrow, prepared to give Quebec a constitutional veto as a price to get her signature? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I say to my honourable friend on this very serious issue, I am frankly unhappy to learn that he has chosen to wear a much smaller mantle on these issues than his predecessors have done.

Mr. Grossman: Which of my predecessors? How about Pierre Elliott Trudeau? Who agrees with that?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Messrs Davis, Robarts and others; and it is not in the great traditions of his party, I may say to my honourable friend opposite.

May I say to my honourable friend opposite that I think he probably has a misread on this subject. I have been spending a considerable amount of time on it lately. I do not pretend to be a constitutional expert, but I can tell him I have talked to my colleagues across the country and I am not sure that his analysis is exactly right. I think he must go beyond the newspapers that perhaps my honourable friend reads.

I say to my honourable friend, I think there is the potential to make a deal here. It is not a question of elevating this into a special status situation. Once that phrase is used it has a lot of emotive connotations that perhaps my honourable friend opposite would like to have emanate from the discussion, but I do not see it in those terms at all. I see it as not dissimilar to the kind of discussion in which a deal was almost made in 1971 and the Victoria formula, which I am sure my honourable friend would not have called special status in that regard. It was a recognition of some of the—

Mr. Grossman: Did I use the words “special status”?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Yes, to the best of my knowledge the member did use the words “special status”. I am saying to my honourable friend that I think we have the makings of a deal here. I think we have an opportunity to recognize the realities of this country, drawn together with an open, generous nation-building heart in the situation, which obviously, my honourable friend opposite, would be excluded by any of my colleagues across the country.

Mr. Grossman: The Premier has totally misunderstood the whole nature of all those discussions. He has totally misunderstood. Pierre Trudeau would blush at that statement. The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) is telling us Pierre’s position.

Mr. Speaker: Order, the Leader of the Opposition and the Attorney General. I will wait if you wish to continue wasting the time of the members.

Mr. Grossman: The Attorney General should stand up and say it.

Mr. Speaker: We will just wait.

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, I invite the Attorney General to stand up and repeat what he said.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. This is question period. The member for Algoma with a new question.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Natural Resources regarding the announcement by Spruce Falls Power and Paper in Kapuskasing, a company which is 51 per cent owned by Kimberly-Clark in the United States. It announced on April 21 a shutdown of the sawmill with a net loss of 162 jobs as of August 28, 1987, out of a total work force of 1,800, despite the fact that the total Spruce Falls Power and Paper operation has made a profit of \$55 million over the past three years.

Will the minister agree that his government should go along with the request of the Canadian Paperworkers Union for a moratorium on this closure until March 31, 1988, so that the parties involved, along with the provincial government, can review the situation, assess the economic position of the company and the effects on the community and develop alternative approaches for protecting the jobs in this one-industry town?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: We are very much concerned about any loss of jobs in northern Ontario and in the sawmills of northern Ontario. The request being made of me is not one I can

answer specifically right now without going into some of the details. I am going to suggest to the honourable member that I shall examine the details, because the matter is so important, and share with him within a very short time what we can do to help alleviate that problem.

Mr. Wildman: I am glad the minister has taken this approach with regard to the loss of jobs in northern Ontario, rather than the approach of his colleague the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) towards the unemployed in the north.

Is the minister aware that this company is 49 per cent owned by the New York Times and that its main export product is newsprint for that company? Is he satisfied that an American-owned company like this can close down an operation that leaves so many people out of work and blame that closure on the 15 per cent tax that has been imposed on the export of softwood lumber because of the agreement between the Conservative federal government and the United States government, when in fact this company is profitable and last year alone made profits of \$15 million?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question has been asked.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: There is some comfort in the fact that the 15 per cent tax has not had the impact it could have had. That is at least a little relief for the sawmills and wood producers of northern Ontario. I am not so sure it is not going to have an impact because there are not many industries that can withstand a 15 per cent increase to their cost of operations.

Certainly, the Premier and many members of cabinet have spent a good many hours in northern Ontario sitting across the desks. I can share with the member some of the meetings that we have had and how tough we got with some of those operators as to what their responsibilities were in some of those communities. The fact remains that I shall take an initiative, as the member has described, and get back to him within the next couple of days.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Gordon: I have a question for the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. One of the things that baffled people in northern Ontario with regard to yesterday's speech from the throne was that there was no immediate help for people in the north. It was all long-term stuff.

We in the north would like to know when he is going to recognize that we have two Ontarios: the prosperous south and the resource-dependent north. The people of the north are paying \$90 for

every man, woman and child when it comes to gasoline. When will the minister equalize gasoline prices between north and south?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: By way of a response, some may ask when the honourable member is going to be consistent, rather than being an opportunist running around trying to grab on to every little idea that comes along. However, let me leave that.

I would think most people in northern Ontario would say they have seen more activity from this government in the last two years than they saw in the previous 40 years. I think my honourable friends would even have to admit that. My friend the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) was embarrassed at how well this government has done in northern Ontario. We have a wide range of programs that were talked about yesterday, and members will hear more things in the future about roads in northern Ontario, about the heritage fund and about northern development programs. There has been an explosion of activity there.

I recognize there are real problems and we have things yet to address, but I can tell members that we are addressing them in a serious-minded and sincere way, the likes of which has never been done in this province before.

1450

Mr. Gordon: There is not one cent for the ordinary people in northern Ontario; nothing that they could spend on food and shelter now. Let us take a look at the speech from the throne. That is the government's brave, new statement. The speech from the throne says the primary policy in northern Ontario is to look at home-grown ideas. This is where we in the north are going to flourish, the government is going to listen to home-grown ideas. I have some home-grown ideas for the government. I have letters from municipalities all across northern Ontario, and they are all asking the government for one thing. They want it to equalize the price of gasoline between north and south. They want the government to put that money back into the pockets of the people of northern Ontario for shelter and food, and the Premier gets up and gives me a blithering answer about something he is going to do 10 years from now. These are the people. They are telling him, "This is our home-grown solution."

Mr. Speaker: Next, the question.

Mr. Gordon: What is the Premier going to do about it?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I was not looking specifically to the member opposite for any particularly good ideas, but I appreciate the letters he has brought forward to this House. As he knows, that has been an ongoing discussion for a long period of time. I see he has recently jumped on the bandwagon, along with his other colleagues, which is a very interesting change from his predecessor.

With respect to that issue, as the member knows, Dr. Rosehart and a lot of others reported on it. It is an issue that has been referred to the northern development councils for discussion as well, and they have had very interesting discussions about that. There are lots of people who have different ideas on these situations, but a number of people think those moneys are better put back into transportation infrastructure, put back into roads, and used to make sure we have those kinds of opportunities.

Mr. Harris: The Liberal hacks are ripping us off, that is how this government builds our roads. It is going to rip us off and then build our roads with that money. That is a stupid idea, and it did not come from the north.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not pretend to be Santa Claus, who can do everything for everybody, spending more on the one hand and cutting taxes on the other hand, but I think he will see us coming forward with very meaningful programs that mean real things, short-term and long-term, for development in northern Ontario.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) may have an opportunity later to ask a question.

Mr. Harris: I will have plenty of time.

Mr. Speaker: Fine.

NORTHERN ONTARIO HERITAGE FUND

Mr. Morin-Strom: I have a question for the Premier and Minister of Northern Development and Mines. New Democrats have long advocated a northern Ontario heritage fund to promote diversification and economic development in northern Ontario. Yesterday, the speech from the throne said that such a fund will be established. However, the Premier told the press that the fund will be funded initially by the hard-hit lumber industry through the 15 per cent export tax on softwood lumber, providing an obviously inadequate funding basis, some \$30 million to \$40 million. How much provincial money from

provincial coffers is the Premier going to put into this fund?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am glad to see my honourable friend stand up in this House and bleed for the pulp and paper companies, these hard-hit pulp and paper companies. This is a new expression of sympathy for them, and I am sure the companies will be glad to hear of this new-found sympathy that my honourable friend has summoned up in his heart.

I just want to remind him that the money is not coming through the export tax directly from those companies; it is going through the federal government and being recycled. That is what is happening with that money. It was a decision by the federal government to extract that, and it is going to come back to the province.

For further details on the northern Ontario heritage fund, he will have to attend the budget of the honourable Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), who will discuss this in great detail.

Mr. Morin-Strom: In other words, the only money that is going in is coming in through the federal government's program and the tax that is going to be imposed on the softwood lumber industry. I agree that the whole issue has been a disaster, but the Premier is just further complicating it and absconding that money rather than putting provincial money into this program.

Layoffs are already hurting northern Ontario communities that depend on the lumber industry. Now that the money from the export tax is being diverted into the northern Ontario heritage fund for long-term capital development—and the Premier had previously promised to take those funds to soften the negative impact of those layoffs on the northern communities affected—what is he going to do now for those communities and those workers who are losing jobs in the lumber industry?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We have been working very closely with a number of the industries, as my honourable friend knows. We have made that commitment to the northern Ontario heritage fund and a lot of other things. We think a lot of other industrial diversifications in northern Ontario are showing some results.

Mr. Pierce: Where?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend may not agree with that, but I do not think he can stand in this House and in any way diminish our commitment to building northern Ontario. I think he knows that is real, and he has seen real results as well.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr. Bernier: I have a question for the Minister of Education. I listened with interest earlier in the day as the minister expounded in great detail about his concern and his compassion for the students of this province. I hope he has some positive answers for me.

The minister is well aware that the secondary school teachers of the Dryden Board of Education have been on strike since April 6 of this year. We are now 23 days into that strike and some 1,600 students are in jeopardy. Two of these schools, the Queen Elizabeth District High School in Sioux Lookout and the Dryden High School, are semestered. The grade 12 and grade 13 students of these schools are in serious jeopardy of losing their school year. Over 100 students have already sought classes in other communities, such as Thunder Bay, Kenora and Fort Frances, at great personal sacrifice and expense.

I would also point out to the minister—

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Bernier: Mr. Speaker, I have to point this out.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate that; however, it is a lengthy preamble.

Mr. Bernier: It is part of the question where native people are involved. Native students have left the schools.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate that, but this is question period. Please place your question.

Mr. Bernier: With only two months left in the school year, will the minister reconsider my earlier request to pick up the phone today, call the Dryden school board and the school teachers and urge them to get back to the bargaining table in the interest of all the students in that district?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am aware of the situation to which the honourable member makes reference and I share his concern. I am very hopeful that the collective bargaining process is going to resolve this situation at an early time so those young people in the Dryden area secondary schools can be back in class receiving the education they require and to which they are entitled. But I want to say that the government takes the view that this situation is best resolved by local parties sitting at the local table working it out together. That is my expectation in this situation, as it is in all others.

Mr. Bernier: I have to tell the minister that is a most disappointing response, after his earlier comments of compassion for the students of this

province, to have him stand up in his place and not show any concern for those 1,600 students.

I urge him. This is the 23rd day of that strike. The former Minister of Education, the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson), did it on two occasions in her capacity as Minister of Education. I also point out to him that the Education Relations Commission has not yet been in touch with the board or the administrator with respect to the jeopardy of the school students. Will the minister take action today?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to remind the member of something, which I am sure he has a very keen knowledge of as a former member of the executive council. That is, of course, that the legislation, Bill 100, provides a process. It also gives the Education Relations Commission a mandate to monitor and to facilitate. It is the responsibility of the commission to advise me as to the developments in these disputes, which it is doing.

I repeat, while some can imagine panaceas, experience clearly suggests the best resolution of this kind of difficulty is local boards and local teacher groups deciding these questions and resolving them at the local level in the best interests of the students involved. I expect that will be done in the Dryden dispute.

PURCHASE OF PLANTS

Mr. Mackenzie: I have a question to the Minister of Labour. What information can the Minister of Labour give this House concerning the Hershey takeover of the Nabisco candy division in terms of the number of jobs that may be lost at the various plants in Toronto, Hamilton and Smiths Falls, as well as the possibility of any of the plants closing? What advance information or consultation took place with his ministry before this takeover announcement?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: There was not advance consultation or discussions before that takeover. The information I have until this date does not indicate there will be layoffs or plant closures within the province. The ministry has been monitoring this matter and has made inquiries. The last information I have, which is one week old, is that no layoffs were contemplated as a result of the takeover.

1500

Mr. Mackenzie: The Cadbury workers were not quite so lucky and I wonder what will happen here. Why does the throne speech contain nothing that would deal with workers' loss of jobs through plant closures or takeovers? Why is there no justification and no producing of

information, as the minister himself has just admitted, and no additional assistance for or responsibility to the workers in plant rationalizations? Did the minister lack influence in cabinet before the throne speech or are we looking at another broken Liberal promise?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is somewhat humorous to listen to my friend talk about broken promises. This government has lived up not just to the commitments of the document signed some 22 months ago but also to the commitments the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and this government made all over the province. I am very proud of the way we have lived up to the commitments.

I know my friend would not want to forget that within the throne speech there was some discussion of an industrial restructuring commissioner. In the days to come, the government will come forward with its proposals in that regard. We are also continuing to work on and bring forward comprehensive amendments to the Employment Standards Act.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. McLean: I have a question for the Minister of Health. The Simcoe County District Health Council originally reported to him in June 1985 with regard to the hospital in Orillia. Subsequently, in April 1986, the district health council submitted to him its recommendations as to what requirements should be in Orillia. The minister accepted those recommendations in June 1986. Since that time nothing concrete has transpired. Does the minister intend to approve the new hospital for Orillia and to commit funding for it?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman may not be quite aware of all the things that have transpired since June 26, 1985. In addition to other things, we have put in place a very major capital program to which there were requests for assistance at the district health council level, some of those coming from the Simcoe county area.

We asked for and sought out some advice from the district health council in the days following June 1986, upon which his question was based. We have received the advice of that health council and of health councils right across the province with respect to what we can do to put together a full capital plan for Ontario. Those things are now under review. There are no announcements to be made at this time, but when appropriate decisions are made we will be able to advise him further.

Mr. McLean: Yesterday, in the throne speech, the government talked about \$850 million for hospital facilities. Is it a commitment for immediate improvement to our hospitals or is it a commitment over eight years? We have two hospitals in the riding of Simcoe East, one in Orillia and one in Midland, that are both looking for funds to improve and build. When is the minister going to act and approve funds for these hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Elston: Because of the starvation diet on which these hospitals existed for a number of years under the administration of the honourable member's party, a lot of hospitals are looking for funds to renovate, regenerate and provide the services they really would like to do.

What is happening is that we are putting together a very major program that is taking a lot of time and consideration so we can help those people who have felt neglected for many years. I agree they were neglected for many years and we now are moving to come up with a program that is responsible and will respond to the needs of the people of those areas.

I have no announcements for the member today. He, of all people, must understand that some very good planning has to be done in the absence of the planning he and his colleagues obviously were not able to undertake in their days in government.

ROOMERS, BOARDERS AND LODGERS

Mr. Reville: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. People who live in rooming houses have been under increasing attack in the last few months. As we speak today, the people who live at 328, 330 and 332 Dundas Street East, 433 Ontario Street, 423 Sherbourne Street, 261 Gerrard Street East and 209 Carlton Street, as well as a very large number of people at 100 Lippincott Street, are facing eviction. Why has the minister delayed, for 16 months, putting a stop to these evictions by bringing roomers under the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Act?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As the honourable member knew, I instituted a task force to look into the roomers' and boarders' situation. He asked why I delayed 16 months. He knew the process. He heard the government state very emphatically in the throne speech too that it would be brought under the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Mr. Reville: The minister has neglected to tell the House that the task force process he set up was repudiated by his ministry and that he has had an alternative group writing a report on the task force. In the meantime, literally hundreds of

rooming houses have been closed down and thousands of people have been put out on the street with nowhere to live. Will the minister support an immediate bill that will bring roomers, once and for all, under the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Act, like every other tenant in this province?

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is not the case at all. The member knew that when Bairstow brought the report forward an advisory group was established by me to bring forward its recommendation and bring its professional skills to it. That is being submitted to me now, and when that results those recommendations will be dealt with. To say that we are delaying it is not so at all, and to say that my staff, by whom he means the civil servants, are putting their views to it is not so. It is the advisory group that is bringing forward its recommendations coupled with Bairstow's recommendations, and we will act on that as soon as it comes forward, without any delay.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Cousens: I have a question to the Treasurer. It arises from the people of York, the MPPs of York, the region of York, the mayors of York and the commuters of York. People who want to travel into the Toronto area and around Toronto are desirous of information about Highway 407. The speech from the throne yesterday alluded to the possibility of some spending. I want to know how much money has been set aside for Highway 407, for this important need, by the Treasurer.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It would be inappropriate for me to refer to a specific amount in the budget. We have most of the material ready and I would be pleased to present it to the Legislature as early as May 14, but there seems to be some unwillingness on the part of the member's colleagues and those in the New Democratic Party to agree. There is no way that the specifics in the budget having to do with allocations of public moneys to various programs can be discussed before the budget is put before the House.

Mr. Harris: The throne speech yesterday indicated, "We will seek to attain these goals in a fiscally responsible manner." Given that and given that some thought obviously went into that in the throne speech, I wonder if the Treasurer could tell us, within \$100 million or so, how much the throne speech will cost?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, you must be aware, as is the House leader for the official opposition, that the Treasury is deeply involved

in the decisions associated with the costing of the throne speech initiatives. It is my responsibility to bring to the House the information required not only by the members of the Legislature but also by the taxpayers, the people who pay the bill. I am quite anxious to do that as early as May 14; if members opposite are anxious to hear it then, I earnestly want their co-operation in that connection.

1510

[Applause]

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am used to this kind of welcome for my questions.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The Minister of Community and Social Services today made an announcement about the developmentally handicapped. In the remaining 30 seconds, can he explain why he has arbitrarily chosen 130 individuals to take out of the totally unsatisfactory living locations of homes for special care within the province of Ontario instead of addressing the needs of the full 1,900 developmentally handicapped people who are in those accommodations now but should be in the community?

Mr. McClellan: That is what you told the Toronto Star you were going to do.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am sorry, but I did not tell the Star that.

Mr. McClellan: The Office of the Premier told the Star.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No, the Premier's office did not tell the Star that.

As I am sure my colleague would appreciate, the ability of communities and community agencies to be able to provide for the needs of that many people is just not there. Therefore, in consultation with them, we have indicated we will do this in a staged phasing-out. We have committed ourselves, over the next five to seven years, to move out the thousand people who are under the age of 55, and at the same time to work on alternative arrangements for those who are over 55.

PETITIONS

NATUROPATHY

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I have a petition to the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Reville: I wish to table a petition signed by 103 residents which reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Bring forward Bill 80."

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I wish to table a petition which reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

With these signatures, the total now is 697 persons.

NATUROPATHY

Mr. McGuigan: I have a petition signed by 30 residents.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is our constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of our preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

THERAPEUTIC ABORTION SERVICES

Mr. Guindon: I wish to table a petition from people in my riding which reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reject the recommendations of the Powell study. We understand that this study recommends the opening of government-run abortion clinics. We believe that there are already too many abortions

done in this province and would like to see access restricted and not made easier."

The number of names is 4,873.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have two petitions. The first one reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, want the government of Ontario to be aware of our problem in Windsor and Essex county, of the desperate need for help for underdeveloped children in our community. The regional children's centre at Windsor Western Hospital Centre and the Child's Place of Labelle Street, Windsor, are not adequately funded. The waiting list at both of these establishments is very long. Every day we wait and the need for more money to help these children grows. These children are our future and are the future governments of Ontario. Let us not let them down. Please show us that the buck does not stop in London. Let the people of Essex county know that we are Canadians as well."

It is signed by 2,500 people in the city of Windsor.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The second petition I have deals with a fire where three people were killed, a one-year-old, a two-year-old and a mother 23 years old, in an Ontario Housing Corp. project.

"We, the undersigned residents of Windsor Housing Authority units situated at Reginald Street, would like to bring our concerns to the attention of the Ministry of Housing. We would like to see some kind of comprehensive fire prevention program started out here as soon as possible.

"We would also like to request that more smoke alarms be installed in each unit, as well as one fire extinguisher per unit or apartment. We are extremely concerned about the numerous fires and the subsequent loss of life. The speed at which a fire engulfs a unit concerns us most.

"We respectfully await your urgent action on this matter."

It is signed by all the residents in that housing project.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Pouliot: I have a petition signed by 1,450 endangered residents of Manitouwadge.

"We, the residents of Manitouwadge and people who travel Highway 614, wish to petition the government of Ontario to complete the resurfacing, rebuilding and reconstruction of

Highway 614 between Highway 17 and Manitouwadge in the summer of 1987."

HOCKEY GAME

Mr. Gillies: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just want to bring to your attention and that of the House that the Brantford Clamatos hockey team, better known as the Motts, recently won the Allan Cup in four straight games. Perhaps you could guide me on whether it would be in order to bring that up at this point.

Mr. Speaker: I wish to inform the member that the appropriate time would be during members' statements.

REPORTS BY COMMITTEES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. D. R. Cooke from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs presented the committee's report.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: This is a historic first consultation as a result of the request for consultation of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in both his budget of 1985 and his budget of 1986. This consultation took place starting in November last year. There was close liaison with the Treasury with regard to the facilities that are available. As well, we spoke to approximately 70 groups, and about 30 of them made oral presentations to the committee.

The result was a unanimous report that the budget should contain additional funds for post-secondary, secondary and primary education; that there should be creation of regional development and economic diversification programs in both northern Ontario and eastern Ontario; that there should be capital works programs in the transportation sector over the course of the next five years; that the government should evaluate the increasing financial responsibilities on municipal governments, particularly with regard to the environmental pollution problems we are facing, and that there be encouragement of community health care programs and institutional management incentives, among other requests.

The committee also unanimously recommended that the government address its operating position, that is the difference between total current revenues and total current expenditures, based on both social and economic responsibilities.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. R. F. Johnston from the standing committee on social development presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill with certain amendments:

Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

1520

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. R. F. Johnston from the standing committee on social development presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bills with certain amendments:

Bill 177, An Act to amend the Health Facilities Special Orders Act.

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Motion agreed to.

Bills ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

Ms. Caplan, on behalf of Mr. Brandt, from the standing committee on administration of justice presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill with certain amendments:

Bill 154, An Act to provide for Pay Equity in the Broader Public Sector and in the Private Sector, the title of which is amended to read An Act to provide for Pay Equity.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Breaugh from the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly presented the committee's report.

Mr. Breaugh: This is the report on the service of process on the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) within the precincts of the House.

Very briefly, the recommendations are that no action be taken against any individual or member. We are making some recommendations for changes to the sections of the Legislative

Assembly Act that deal with what we would call, in the broadest terms, "privilege in the serving of documents."

We also make recommendations in here that would hope to clarify for the public, the legal profession and others who may be interested in the serving of documents and the members themselves and their staffs precisely what all this is about, and that perhaps it should be done in terms that are more readily understood by the immediate world and the immediate world should be made aware of those terms.

Although there is not a specific finding in here, there are matters that are of concern to all members and to others who may be involved in the legal profession. We would draw that to members' attention and ask that at some future time we have a debate on the matter.

On motion by Mr. Breagh, the debate was adjourned.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Mr. Callahan from the select committee on health presented the committee's report.

Mr. Callahan: As members know, this committee was set up in July 1986 with a mandate to recommend what role the commercial for-profit sector would play in the provision of services in Ontario.

We met in August. We were briefed by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, and we thank them for their extensive briefing. We then spent some time in selecting consultants, and we were able to secure Greg Stoddart and Roberta Labelle of McMaster University. They have assisted us considerably and we thank them for their help up to this point and their continuing help through our mandate.

The committee met in September and we decided an essential first step in this inquiry would be to determine the extent of for-profit activity in health and social services in Ontario. We felt this could best be done by compiling an inventory of service delivery by program area, describing what health and social services are delivered in Ontario, how they are delivered and, wherever possible, how delivery has changed over time.

In January 1987, the committee met to hear presentations from its research staff and Research Innovations in order to examine the extent of commercialization in Ontario, to decide those areas on which to focus for public hearings and to discuss the next phase of its inquiry. It was determined at that time that the focus is, first, for

the public hearings to be set in two areas, child care and the contracting out of hospital management to the private for-profit sector. A second set of public hearings at a later date will concentrate on long-term care for the elderly, including nursing homes, homes for the aged, homemaking and home nursing services in chronic care facilities.

The interim report that has been filed today is a compilation of the information that was provided to us in the briefings. That is our interim report.

MOTIONS

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the appointment of the member for Carleton East (Mr. Morin) as Deputy Chairman of the committee of the whole House be continued.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that, notwithstanding standing order 2(a), the House shall meet at 11 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, April 30, 1987, and that notwithstanding standing order 71, only ballot item 1 shall be taken up tomorrow morning and that the requirement for notice be waived for ballot items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE CROWN AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 2, An Act to amend the Proceedings Against the Crown Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Scott: This bill and the bill that follows are bills which were introduced in the last sessions and which are being reintroduced.

BARRISTERS AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 4, An Act to amend the Barristers Act.

Motion agreed to.

SOUTH AFRICAN TRUST INVESTMENTS ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES PLACEMENTS SUD-AFRICAINS DETENUS EN FIDUCIE

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 5, An Act permitting Trustees and Other Persons to dispose of South African Investments.

L'hon. M. Scott propose la première lecture du projet de loi 5, Loi permettant aux fiduciaires et à d'autres personnes d'aliéner des placements sud-africains.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALDIMAND-NORFOLK AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 6, An Act to amend the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: Currently within the region, 75 per cent of the property tax bill is in respect to regional and school board costs. This legislation will allow the implementation of new cost-sharing arrangements based on local taxable assessment and common mill rates for each local government jurisdiction, to correct existing inequities.

1530

Mr. Speaker: Does the minister have another bill?

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITIES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 7, An Act to amend Certain Acts respecting Regional Municipalities.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: This bill was introduced in the last session but it died on Orders and Notices.

CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. O'Connor moved first reading of Bill 8, An Act to amend the Children's Law Reform Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. O'Connor: This bill was introduced in the last session and is being reintroduced now. When passed, it will provide a new mechanism for the resolution by court-appointed mediators of access disputes concerning children. Further, it will provide for access rights to be exercised through supervised access centres, if necessary. The bill will also add to the factors considered by a court in determining the best interests of the child and the importance of maintaining emotional ties between a child and his or her grandparents. I feel this will be a very useful

addition to the law relating to children and their proper maintenance and upkeep in this province.

ONTARIO ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACT

Mrs. Grier moved first reading of Bill 9, An Act respecting Environmental Rights in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs. Grier: This act is similar to Bill 172 which was introduced in the last session and which, in turn, is very similar to a bill introduced previously by the member for Huron-Bruce (Mr. Elston). It would give citizens the right to go to court to protect the environment where damage is being done. It would ensure that environmental decisions are not made without a full public hearing. It would provide for access to information, for intervenor funding and it would give employees the right to refuse to pollute.

LANDLORD AND TENANT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Reville moved first reading of Bill 10, An Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Reville: The bill will afford roomers, boarders and lodgers the protections of other tenants now provided by the Landlord and Tenant Act.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr. Martel moved that pursuant to standing order 37, the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss the following matter of urgent public importance: the tragic deaths of five workers at Inco in Sudbury within the past month in the light of the report of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety released today, which concludes that the promise of an improvement in the future wellbeing of workers implied in the Ham royal commission "has, for the most part, gone unfulfilled."

Mr. Speaker: The notice of motion was received in my office at 10:40 a.m. and complies with standing order 37. I will listen to the honourable member for up to five minutes, as well as to representatives from the other parties.

Mr. Martel: Today, I raised a number of matters with the minister and I must say that words do not allow me to respond to his answers. In fact, my friend has gone around this province for the past 10 weeks trying desperately to break the solidarity within the trade union movement that is calling for Bill 149. These are some of the letters demanding that Bill 149 proceed. Union

after union, including the president of the Ontario Federation of Labour and right on down, has indicated to me, by phoning directly or talking to my staff, that this minister has systematically tried to break the solidarity within the trade union movement on Bill 149. Today he did that knowing full well that the report of the advisory council, his council, including the spouse of the member from London, signed a report indicating that what was going on in that field was atrocious and that in fact workers could not protect themselves under the present act.

Let me indicate the number of fatalities in the past five years that have been recognized. In 1982, there were 228; in 1983, there were 232; in 1984, there were 234; in 1985, there were 195 and in 1986, 220. Those are the fatalities in this province in the past five years that have been recognized; allowed deaths. The number of injuries in that period ranged from 349,747 annually to 442,600 last year. There is a tragedy out there. Surely working people in this province have a right to go to work in the morning feeling that they are going to come home at night safe and sound, and that is not happening.

The best friend we have in this fight is the minister himself because everyone is so opposed to what he is doing. Along with his own staff and friends McKenzie and Laskin, those two phoney characters who wrote a report that was the most atrocious attack on the trade union movement, he has solidified the trade union movement. The only people they did not respond to or reply to were the people who had charge of the Occupational Health and Safety Act, industry. We have that kind of slaughter in the work place.

This council, the minister's own council led by Dr. McCalla, in a report that this minister buried for over a year, reported the findings of the survey done for this task force. What were the findings of that committee? The task force report said in part: "The committees are often perceived as ineffective in the most dangerous work places. The ministry concentrates inspection resources on large unionized work places. Nearly 80 per cent of all work places are in violation of the law in some manner. In 35 per cent of all the work places, worker safety representatives are selected by management, a clear contravention of the act." This is a report prepared for the advisory council and the advisory council has said in its report to the minister on March 25—let me quote a couple of the main items in his advisory council's report.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I hate to interrupt the honourable

member when he is in full flight, but are we not supposed to be debating now whether the debate should proceed, rather than having the substance of the debate? It is difficult for us to participate in an orderly way in the motion before us when the member uses his undoubted ability to launch himself on a tirade directed against the minister, when in fact we are trying to decide whether we should set aside the business of the House.

1540

Mr. Speaker: That is correct. That is the motion before the House, and I am sure the honourable member will continue for his 55 seconds.

Mr. Martel: He just took one minute of my time with his little interjection, which was out of order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Why do you not let the Speaker judge that? He says that you are out of order.

Mr. Martel: The Speaker does not need the Treasurer's help around here. Does the Treasurer think he is his chief adviser?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: He says you are out of order.

Mr. Martel: Are you his chief adviser?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: He is going to keep you in line.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable member has 30 seconds.

Mr. Martel: Let me talk about why this report—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martel: I am saying we must proceed because the minister's own advisory council said that the act does not work, and the promises of Bill 70 and the royal commission are not being fulfilled. The council also says that before we proceed with any specific reform there should be an open forum and a debate. This minister is going around the province trying to kill any opportunity for debate with his presentation to union after union, and he knows it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member's time has expired.

Mr. Gordon: I would like to remind the House that since 1976 there have been three major studies into safety in the mining industry. Volumes have been written on this subject in this province. If the minister were to go down to the legislative library and walk through it he would find at least 29 page-long bibliographies on

health and safety. What perplexes me, what confounds me, and I am certain it confounds many of the other members of this Legislature, is why, after all this, we still have workers dying in Ontario and we still have workers being maimed on the job. In a general sense, I believe that the problem is that we insist on playing with people's lives; we insist on playing with people's lives in the work place; and we do that by making only small changes in the Occupational Health and Safety Act in this province.

I was at Levack mine a few days ago, and it was a dark, grey, cold, rainy day. I was there at about 6:30 and I watched the strained faces of those workers who were waiting for their mates to be brought up from the 3,700-foot level. I want to tell the gentlemen and ladies of the Legislature that I do not want to have to go out to another mine in the next year to wait for another miner's body to be brought up. The union committee that is charged with the responsibility of being involved in the investigation of those kinds of tragedies does not want to be in those mines.

Tragedies such as the one we are talking about in Sudbury right now are not unknown in the Sudbury region, and I would just like to point out a statistic to my colleagues that I think highlights one of the very basic reasons that the debate in this House has to be today. Since 1976 there have been 134 mining fatalities in Ontario, and 45 of those deaths have occurred in Sudbury mines. That is more than one in three have died in the Sudbury region in mining fatalities.

In Ottawa, we have a debate going on right now about the death penalty and about what is to be done when policemen's lives are taken, and it is a just debate; but somehow our society does not react quite as strongly when a worker is killed. The same universal demand to strengthen the law is not heard when a miner's life is lost or when other workers' lives are lost. I think that is perhaps because we have lost perspective as to what is really going on in the work place in Ontario today.

As well, a few days ago, at a funeral home, I was introduced to one of the wives of one of those workers. In her grief, she turned to two young boys who could not have been more than eight or 12 years of age, who were huddling together, and you could see it was out of fear and grief about what had happened to their father, and she said to them: "I want you to meet Mr. Gordon. He is a big man." I was so humbled by that. Do members know what she was saying? She was saying that members of this Legislature are elected, are given the power to change things and that is why

they are "big men." We are not really big men. We are just ordinary people, but what we have to do, colleagues, is we must debate this issue today in this House, because the people of Ontario, the ordinary workers in Ontario who do not represent any special privileged interest group, deserve no less. I call on you today to debate. I call for that debate.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I agree with some of the wording of this motion, the description of the deaths as tragic. There is no doubt about that. Whether it is irrelevant, I can say, on behalf of my colleagues, that we agree with that assessment. The Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) went to Sudbury immediately. We do not have to argue that we assess this as a tremendously important and tragic circumstance.

You are also aware, Mr. Speaker, that the regular order of business this afternoon calls for a debate on the speech from the throne. On page 38 of that speech, there is a reference to worker safety. Whether the reference was there, under our rules, there will be a complete and open time for an extensive discussion and debate about worker safety, and no doubt there will be during the course of the debate.

To set aside the business, in my view, is illogical in that we agree on the tragic nature of this matter. The speech that we are about to debate deals with that and, if the opposition members consider it inadequate, of course it is their right and responsibility to point out that inadequacy. We, on this side, are prepared to proceed with the debate on the policies of the government. We simply indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are anxious to proceed in that regard.

Mr. McClellan: We can do it tomorrow.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Certainly we can do it tomorrow and we will do it tomorrow. In the letter signed by the House leader of the Conservatives, the official opposition, he points out his concern that with today's emergency debate and given that the standing orders require eight days of throne debate prior to the budget, that he is concerned that, in fact, there may not be sufficient time.

Mr. Martel: On a point of order: The Treasurer should be speaking to the substance. That is what he just finished telling me not six or seven minutes ago. He should be speaking to the substance of the motion, which he is not doing.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The motion is giving reasons for or against the setting aside of the business of the House. Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member for Sudbury East is wrong again.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Martel: Oh no, Mr. Speaker. He told me I had to speak to the substance of the motion and he is not doing that. He cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There is only one way to have it, and the motion is to whether we will have the debate now. The honourable member will have an opportunity later to repeat his flights of oratory and we will hear them on a number of occasions. It so happens that his first flight was out of order, and I brought that to the attention of Mr. Speaker and, as I understood it, he agreed. I am simply saying that we have every opportunity in the normal course of events in the order of business set down on the Orders and Notices to debate this matter.

For reasons the member from Sudbury has put forward, he is prepared to move that this be set aside. There would be those who would say—and they would be out of order and they might be attributing motives—that his motives are something less than pristine and that the generalissimo of the New Democratic Party, who actually signed this motion and who was not in the House when the time came for it to be presented, is calling the shots over there. I must say that the member from Sudbury is much more capable of flights of oratory in this connection.

1550

I simply want to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the ordinary course of events would deal with this important and tragic matter in a way that would be much better than setting aside the ordinary course of business and proceeding with an emergency debate. The NDP at least has the good sense to keep some of its members in here as we come up to the emergency debate. When we look at the members of the official opposition, as usual, they are busy about other matters.

We believe that we should proceed with the orderly debate on the government's policy which is going to be under attack. We think it is correct; the members on the other side of the House do not and they want to attack it. We have a system that works well for debate in this House, pending a vote when it is decided whether the members over there are going to support us. It is extremely important that we do that. I certainly do intend to vote against this debate.

I urge the honourable members, who under normal circumstances are logical and supportive of the understandable procedures that have

developed in this House over many years, to reconsider. On that basis, I ask that the motion be put.

Mr. Martel: This is one of the procedures under the standing orders.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Harris: I bring a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I do not like to do it, but I do. I think the House leader for the government may want to reconsider some of the things he said towards the tail end of his speech that was supposed to be on the point. I believe he used words imputing motive. On behalf of some honourable members of this Legislature, I think he may want to reflect on that and withdraw any connotation that there was any motive other than honesty, integrity and a desire among members of all parties of this House to address a very serious matter.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On the point of order, I used my words rather carefully. I said, "Some might say." Mr. Speaker, I want you to review that and I will certainly abide by your decision in this connection.

Mr. Speaker: I will certainly be very pleased to do as requested. I will review the transcript.

I inform the members that we have now completed standing order 37(c), where three members within this House had the opportunity to express their views on whether this debate should go forth.

Standing order 37(d) states that the Speaker shall then put the question, "Shall the debate proceed?" which I do now.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion, the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Speaker: The debate will continue. Are there any members wishing to participate? The member for Sudbury East has up to 10 minutes.

Mr. Martel: I have always been amazed how it is that working people can make money for corporations and they are very responsible. Yet when it comes time to protect their health and safety they suddenly become irresponsible and they are not given power within legislation with which to protect themselves. I find that passing strange.

This minister is doing exactly what the previous government has done, that is, in his draft proposals, he does not give workers any

power whatsoever. He leaves the status quo. In fact, what the report I received anonymously today says is that the system does not work; his own advisory council says it does not work.

Let me say in the most blunt and harsh terms I can use that if this Legislature, if this government fails to give workers the right to protect themselves, regardless of the outcry from its corporate friends, and workers continue to die, roughly one every working day of the year, as they have for the past five years as a result of the poor legislation that is in place, we are as guilty as any madman who guns down a policeman or injures some innocent person, because we have listened to the corporate sector, which does not want workers to have those rights to protect themselves.

The present legislation gives total and absolute power under the act to management. The role of the working class in that legislation is merely a consultative role. They have no rights under the act to protect themselves. A lot of my friends think they have rights, but in fact the act gives absolute power to management.

If people want to say management has that right because it owns the operation, that is crazy. Working people should not have to sacrifice their lives to the god called money. In fact, if they can make profit for people and are responsible enough to do that, surely they have the right to protect their lives and their safety. The slaughter and the mayhem that continue in this province have to stop.

When the minister's own advisory council reports to him and he continues to run around the province in the face of that report, which calls for hearings, a new debate, a new dialogue in order to get at the problems that are causing the havoc out there, and he continues to espouse that hunk of junk he has presented which continues the status quo—as well as the minister, there is only one group that has asked for the status quo to be continued: McKenzie-Laskin. Of course, the minister paid McKenzie-Laskin to do an in-house inquiry, which should have been public. He did not want it public. Those are the only ones.

The Law Reform Commission of Canada says the internal responsibility system does not work. The Provincial Auditor says it does not work, time after time. The minister's own advisory task force says it does not work—and he shakes his head. I am glad, because listen to what they say.

I quote his own advisory council: "The apparent lack of measurable progress at the shop floor level is evident also in the results of the

council's survey of joint health and safety committees. Although there may be some room for debate about the conclusions to be drawn from the data, it is clear from the survey that the committee system, as established under the act, is not adequate." Let me go on. "Furthermore, there is no consensus that the internal responsibility system is functioning effectively."

What more does the minister want? It does not work, and what the minister perpetuates in his draft legislation is more of the same. He does not change the balance of power one iota; it remains constantly with management, and the minister cannot deny it. This is his own task force made up of people from universities, the business community and the trade union movement—and he shakes his head.

In fact, when they did the survey, which the minister sat on for over a year before releasing it, they said—and I quoted some of them earlier before I was interfered with by the House leader for the government—"In violation of the law, fully 33 per cent of work places with 20 or fewer employees which use designated toxic substances have no safety committee." Ten years after the act they have no health and safety committees, and the minister wants to perpetuate more of the same.

"In 11 per cent of work places, the worker representative never conducts an inspection. Worker representatives from 26 per cent of all work place committees make no health or safety recommendations whatsoever, those from 38 per cent making recommendations that have no requirement to spend money. In 1,500 work places in which the ministry says there are no designated toxic substances in use, workers and management reported the use of designated substances."

The minister wants more of the same. That is what his bill does. His own advisory task force says you cannot go on with it, do not proceed with legislation until there is an forum which adequately—let me quote: "There is need to restore confidence in this system. An opportunity must be provided for public input and debate on these fundamental issues and concerns before consideration is given to specific proposals for reform."

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His own task force probably has condemned the minister more in its short, three-page report than I have been able to do in three years. They have blistered him. I could not believe the content of that report when I received it. It is an out-and-out attack on the minister, no one else.

For two years he has played games. He has said such things as he is improving, he is hiring more staff. Baloney. He will have roughly the same number of inspectors he had in 1981 in place by the time he gets his new staff.

The minister has a code 99 that he introduced. Code 99 merely means that unless there is an accident, unless there is a work refusal, there is no inspection. The union calls it crisis management. He does not have enough inspectors. My God, there are 250,000 work places at least, and he has 200 people. I talked to an inspector the other day who had 1,300 work places to inspect.

The minister protects people so well that some of his own staff have been sensitized to isocyanates because he could not even protect them. He sits there, and so everything is well in the world. He makes pompous statements about how things are better, conditions are improving, when his own task force, his own advisory council said it is not working not one month ago.

He has continued to go around the province with that document in his possession trying to head off any public debate, any type of forum to discuss occupational health and safety. Is the minister telling me that every trade union leader who has come to me in the past month is lying, that the heads of labour councils are lying when they say the minister is trying to head off any debate and does not want Bill 149?

Mr. McClellan: We know what they are saying.

Mr. Martel: I know what they are saying to me. I know what these letters say to me. I know the pop and the nonsense he has handed us over the years about how many more inspectors there will be. The total is going to be what: 240, 241 maybe, when he is done? There is nothing going on that is going to protect working people, and they have a right to protect themselves. I do not care if the corporate sector squeals a little, because the corporate sector is not the group dying. The people who are dying are the workers, one every working day of the year for the past five years.

I will leave the statistics so my colleagues can take on the minister when he gets up and says no. There have been enough people killed or injured in the past year to fill Maple Leaf Gardens to capacity on 26 consecutive nights, a full house of injured workers. Surely it is time for this government, this Premier (Mr. Peterson), to say: "We have had enough. We are going to have public hearings, and if the minister does not like it, he can resign."

Mr. Pierce: It saddens me to rise and speak in an emergency debate that has been brought about because of the death of four more people in Ontario. Any debate that is motivated by death, whether it be the death of a worker, a policeman or an injured person, is a tough debate to take part in.

I can tell you from my past experience as a miner the situation these poor people experienced just prior to the accident that took their lives. I spent many years in the mines, years underground as an electrician, years inspecting and doing the same type of job that these people were doing, inspecting the shafts, checking out the skipways, checking the hoists, making sure that everything in the mine was going to be in good operating condition for the next worker.

Because of my background and my history in the mines, I have also spent many years on safety committees and felt the frustrations in dealing with mine management, the frustrations in dealing with mine inspectors, the frustrations in trying to get recognition that somewhere, some day, production has to stop in order to make the work place a safe place to be.

Every miner goes to work every day of his life with the idea he may not come home. It is a high-risk industry. We recognize that. The people working in the mines recognize that, but those people are prepared, because it is necessary for them in order to bring home the bacon for their families and to provide an income for their families.

I can tell you of a personal experience I had in a shaft with a downhill conveyor that used to run away every so often, and it used to run away when it was full. There were what they called escape cuts in the shaft, so that if the conveyor ran away, you could get out of the way. If you were at the bottom, where the conveyor belt dumped into a hopper, I am afraid you would not come back up again. For many years, we tried to get safety measures included in the operation of that conveyor, but for many years, our concerns were not listened to. Fortunately for us, that job came to an end before the life of any miner came to an end.

We have a chance now to make sure we provide the necessary safety and accident prevention measures to protect the workers in the work place, to allow them to be an important part and to play a major role in the safety measures that are required to make sure we do not stand in debate again in this House because of an accident that has taken the lives of any more people, whether it be in the mining industry, the

construction industry or any other industry where workers are.

These people who lost their lives in Sudbury were young. They were at the middle threshold of their lives. They will never have an opportunity to see their children graduate from schools and marry or to have grandchildren.

In many cases in the mines, miners go to work at the strangest time of the day. They work in the strangest of conditions that nobody else can appreciate except a miner who works under those conditions. They plead during negotiations. They plead during meetings. They plead during union meetings for somebody to pay attention to their concerns in the industry, for somebody to cut back that little bit on production to make sure that everybody who goes down comes back up again and that they walk out.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) has gone around the province letting the workers know that he is concerned and that the present government is very interested. I am afraid he has not accepted the responsibility of going further and bringing in legislation that allows the workers to have a say, a say that goes beyond just that across the table, a say that becomes enforced and ensures that the safety factors they require are, in fact, endorsed in the industry and become part of the work place.

These people know better than anybody the conditions they work under. They know better than anybody that, although they depend very heavily on the mechanical devices, you can still build in extra precautions. In this case in Sudbury, where there were two areas that were supposed to have stopped the rock from busting through, I think if you look at what happened, perhaps the only safety measure that could have prevented this accident was to have no rocks in the hoppers and for the shaft to be empty of all debris, so that if by some quirk of fate those gates opened, there was nothing to fall. After being a miner for as many years as I was, I cannot for the life of me understand how anybody could be working under a hopper that was full. Never mind the number of safety precautions that were built into the shaft to stop the rock if it fell out; there never should have been any rock in the hopper. Some of these things are almost common sense, yet they happen.

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I think the Minister of Labour has to be prepared to stand up and say it is time now that there were more inspectors, more inspection of work places, more onus on workers and companies to make sure that all the safety factors, not

only the ones that are written but also beyond the ones that are written, are such that these fatalities do not happen in the industry again.

We on this side of the House convey our deepest sympathies to the families of the workers who have been injured and to the workers' wives and families who have suffered such a tragedy.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Since finding out late this morning that there would be this emergency debate, I gave some thought to what remarks I might make in this debate. Certainly, I am at times sorely tempted by the remarks of my friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) to participate in a way that, on reflection, I might regret.

The terrible tragedy of a couple of weeks ago at Levack mine, the trip the Premier and I took to Sudbury that day and my return to Levack and Chelmsford on the Saturday following rate as perhaps the lowest point, the saddest point of my two years as minister. I share the views of all members of the House that it is something none of us wants to see again.

It is well for all of us to reflect upon why the tragedy at Levack brings home the fact that health and safety should be the kind of high priority that they are and why all of us in all parties in this House have perhaps been speaking out more in this area and in this field in the last little while than we did when I first arrived here six years ago.

Very briefly, with this kind of tragedy, I know my colleagues will want to know where we are in terms of the investigation. My colleagues will understand why I will not be terribly precise, but I want to bring them up to date.

A number of senior officials of the mining health and safety branch have been on site since literally almost minutes after the tragedy, including for a time the director of the branch. Two investigators from the branch remain actively involved in the investigation. They have been interviewing witnesses and conducting a thorough investigation of all matters relating to the incident. Of course, a coroner's inquest is mandatory in these cases and one has been called.

The director of the mining health and safety branch was on the scene the day of the tragedy, remained there for more than a day, indeed was down in the mine late on the evening of the tragedy, and has been keeping both myself and the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson) informed on an ongoing basis.

I should tell my colleagues that a re-enactment of the accident was conducted on April 20. It was attended by police, ministry and union investigators.

As well, we announced a two-phase activity. The first was inspections of all loading pocket and shaft inspection procedures in Ontario. Whatever orders are appropriate will be issued on any immediate hazards identified. My friend the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce) spoke quite eloquently about the whole issue of the loading pockets and his concerns in that regard, and I note his remarks with interest.

In a second phase, a comprehensive review of accident statistics, engineering standards, arrangements and inspection procedures in Ontario and other jurisdictions, particularly in the United States and Germany, will take place. The federal government through the Canada Centre for Mineral and Energy Technology has agreed to participate jointly in the national and international aspects of this study. It is being co-ordinated by C. R. Trenka, senior electrical mechanical engineer with the mining branch of the Ministry of Labour.

Through all these efforts and through the joint efforts of government, labour and management in this regard, I am sure we can come up with a better and, hopefully, a completely fail-safe procedure to prevent a similar tragedy from happening again.

I want to indicate to my colleagues that in spite of this tragedy—as I said, one death is too many and yet we have had four at Levack and one just a month previously at Crean Hill—I would not want it to go unnoticed and I want it to be put on the record that in spite of these very glaring examples on the other side, we have had some very real improvements in the mining health and safety area.

In the mining industry, the lost-time frequency has been steadily reduced to the point at which it is at its lowest frequency ever in history. I think the statistic for 1986 is 3.9 for 200,000 man-hours. I noted a few days before the accident at a follow-up conference in Sudbury on ground control and emergency preparedness that if you look at all the safety branches that report under the Workers' Compensation Board, the mining safety branch had the second-worst record in 1980 and by 1986 it had the third-best record.

There have been real and spectacular improvements. Indeed, this is what makes this whole tragedy so frustrating for all of us in so many ways. Improvements had been taking place at

Levack. In 1986, there were only eight orders issued and there has been only one issued to date in 1987. All had been complied with. The lost-time accident frequency for nickel mining in Ontario is 3.2 in 1986 and in the first three months of this year it was only two. In other words, the downturn was continuing; the decline was continuing.

Inco's frequency was even below that. It was 2.8 for 1986 and for the first three months of this year had been 1.6. Levack had a slightly higher one than Inco in general. It was 3.1 in 1986, but until the tragedy of early April, there had been no lost-time accidents at Levack. Indeed, much has been said and much has been written about the fact that the company and the Levack mine had received the first five-star award. In fact, on the day of the funeral the miners of Levack, very proud of their record, wore their five-star jackets.

I think we have made some progress. We have made some very major changes and very positive changes. I note that the number of accidents in the fiscal year that just ended was 84, which is actually one higher than in 1985-86. These are accidents investigated by the branch. Nevertheless, with the growth in our work force and the fact that we had more lost-time injuries represents some small measure of encouragement. We are determined to do better in 1987-88. Perhaps out of the tragedy at Levack we will put in place additional efforts to do even better.

I want to acknowledge that we have also been trying to make some very real improvements within the health and safety division. In that regard, I want to put these facts on the record because there were some comments about the lack of staff and the need for more staff. Since June 1985, the division and related services—by that I am speaking about the legal services branch of the ministry—has received 215 new positions and just less than \$11 million to fund those new positions. I do not think there is a division anywhere in government in any government in Canada that has had that kind of increase in resources. This government is in deadly earnest about getting on with the job. We have added inspectors. We have added people in the occupational health branch, hygienists and others, by the dozens.

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In fact, as I toured the province, one of the problems as a result of hiring additional people so quickly was that we actually have a growing problem of overcrowding, which we will deal with as quickly as possible. We have been hiring people so that we can get on with the job that all

members of the Legislature want us to get on with.

Finally, in the last few seconds let me say that we have put out draft proposals and draft amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. What emerges from those proposals is a newer world than that which is under the current Bill 70. It responds to the government's recognition that an internal responsibility system can work only if the work place parties share power in a better way than they do now and if there are rigorous and effective enforcement mechanisms in place. We are determined to do that and we hope to bring forward those amendments at the earliest possible occasion.

I found it very useful having discussions with both business and labour during the time the Legislature was out and I hope to be able to continue those discussions in the months to come.

Mr. Mackenzie: We should be asking ourselves, all of us, why we are debating this emergency resolution today. I think it is a very legitimate question.

In response to the death of the four miners on April 14, the Premier is quoted as saying, and I read from the *Globe and Mail*: "Mr. Peterson said that the deaths of the four miners are a terrible tragedy. 'I guess what troubles me the most is that it was one of those things that was preventable, it seems to me, somehow or other,' he said. 'It wasn't as if it was an act of nature. It saddens me a great deal, as it saddens everyone in the community.'"

In the *Toronto Star* there was a piece that said, "The four appear to have been victims of 'a preventable accident,' Premier Peterson said yesterday through an aide."

These four miners, following the death of another miner just three weeks earlier at Inco's Crean Hill mine, were but the latest in an ongoing tragedy in terms of miners' deaths in this province. I have to ask, where have the Premier and the Minister of Labour been for the past several years?

The minister talks about more discussion on this since 1981. I go back only to 1975, but it has been a central issue since I have been in this House and we are not a heck of a lot further ahead. Death and disability in the work place and their causes have been outlined and argued with particular intensity in this House and in the committees of this House, in the media, in union halls and union conventions and in the churches over the past several years.

Over the past two years my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel), along with a group from across the union movement that at times numbered in the hundreds, has catalogued health and safety cases, researched the causes and the problems, pinpointed in detail the woefully inadequate legislation and protection for workers in present legislation in Ontario and argued extremely forcefully for necessary changes, so far to little avail.

The member for Sudbury East has not been alone. Never before have I seen the labour movement so involved and so committed to an issue. Workers from across this province played a major role in drafting my colleague's Bill 149. That bill received second reading in this House. In political terms, I am afraid it received second reading for only one reason: The minister and his government had sat on their fannies in a state of near stupefaction for so long, in spite of such overwhelming evidence of their own culpability and in the face of a finally enlightened and aroused public, that had they voted against Bill 149 in the debate in the House it would have been political suicide.

However, having been forced to vote for the member for Sudbury East's Bill 149—I know the minister himself was absent but many of his members did so—because this Liberal government itself had nothing to offer, has he been ready to proceed to public hearings and clause-by-clause discussion on the bill? Not on your life.

We now have the ludicrous picture of the Minister of Labour, and we are getting reports on it almost two or three times a week, running around the province, trying to meet with union presidents and heads of labour councils to argue against, among other things, public hearings and to sell his own legislation which is inadequate. As a matter of fact, he talks about those labour councils that are against Bill 149. Before the debate is over, he has an obligation to get up and name them because we will be back in this House with them.

It is a pathetic attempt at an end run around the Ontario Federation of Labour and the safety and health people who out of their frustration with this government have worked so hard and so long to draft Bill 149. I think the minister, desperate to get back in the ball game and regain some credibility, which he does not have, and even more to try to prevent public hearings that would further expose his and his government's culpability in the work place slaughter, comes across like a little boy trying to reach the washroom before he has an accident. It is not working and it will

not work. Public hearings are one of the bottom-line requirements and this minister had better know it. He has been desperate in his attempt to avoid that up until now.

My colleague is not an unreasonable man. We will look at amendments to a piece of legislation that has been drafted. We will look at amendments that may be necessary to make it a better bill or where we may have gone a little further than the minister thinks he can take the government, but he should not continue to try to flog the pile of garbage that is little more than his own deathbed repentance in terms of safety and health in Ontario. For once, he should show some courage and intelligence and accept what every real work-place health and safety committee tells him, that we need the kinds of changes represented in Bill 149, not the kind of weak attempt the minister is trying to flog across Ontario now.

I am serious and my party is serious when we tell the minister that workers are entitled to a careful exercise of authority in an unsafe operation. They do not have that now and they do not have it so far in the minister's proposed legislation. The stupidity of following the crass and unfeeling advice of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which the minister seems to be doing at times, is unbelievable. In one of their letters, they argue—I sometimes wonder if this is not the minister's basic argument—that the control of safety has to be left in the hands of owner-managers. That should be much too much even for the Liberal Party in Ontario today.

I say to the minister and this government that in few areas have they failed as badly as in the area of safety and health legislation. The member for Sudbury East was right. I have the document to their own committee. It lists the shortcomings, and they are legion. When one has the obligation and authority over workers' health and safety, and when the cases have been presented as often, as forcefully and as accurately as has been the case in this House, there is no longer any excuse for inaction or for any attempt to flog an inferior piece of legislation. If this continues to be the position of this government, it can and will and should be held responsible for the slaughter in the work place.

It may well be time that we consider carefully whether or not the Premier and the minister should be allowed to excuse themselves—I am sorry to have to say it that way—with the words of sympathy we see in their response to the deaths of these five young miners, the four and the one earlier. When they have not brought forward the

legislation, given the kinds of arguments that have been made and the kinds of problems that have been outlined—it covers more than just the mining situation, but that is where we have really seen it driven home in recent days—and when they have failed so totally and under the kind of pressure we know they have been under in this House on these kinds of issues, then maybe it is time we took a look at whether the minister and the Premier had some responsibility in terms of the deaths of these miners.

1630

Maybe they are party to the situation that resulted in the deaths. Maybe they should be held accountable for at least a manslaughter situation in Ontario. I think we have to talk that tough. I think this is exactly what we are facing.

It is not as if they did not have the case and the arguments put before them. They have had, and they have had the entire union movement telling them so. They are trying to use the kind of con job we heard here today on the people who do not agree with this bill. What they do not agree with is the inadequacy of the kind of legislation they have tried to give us in Ontario.

When officers of this government are responsible for what happens to those miners, maybe at that point we will get some action. I hope they have the common sense to look seriously and to get on immediately with Bill 149, which is before this House, because it is the best answer yet drafted by the people who are involved in the health and safety field.

Mr. Gillies: This emergency debate today is very sad for all of us, but I think it is a very necessary debate, and I am glad the members brought it forward for consideration by the House today.

I want to say, and I want to come back to this, it is all the more important that we have this debate today because to date we have seen no indication from the government that there will be an opportunity for a committee of this House to review the McKenzie-Laskin report, something we and the New Democratic Party have been asking for for some time.

We have now had it called into question, indeed, whether there will be an opportunity for a committee of this House to consider the private member's bill that was put forward by the member for Sudbury East. I would certainly look forward to that opportunity, and I would hope it would not be the wish of any party in this House to deny us that opportunity.

So we talk today again, and certainly I agree with the minister that it seems there have been

many opportunities in the last number of months to talk on and on about health and safety matters, but we have to do so today in the light of and faced with the reality of a particular tragedy.

I no longer have the responsibility of being the Labour critic for my party; that has moved to my friend and colleague the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon). But even as Environment critic for my party, I was meeting with Inco officials last week on some environmental matters and I raised this matter with them also, because I think it is of concern to all members in this House.

We have a situation that is all the more glaring and all the more upsetting because of the improvements in the safety record in the mining sector in the last while. I understand the accident rate in mining has dropped some 60 per cent in the last 10 years. That is something we are all very glad of, but when we are faced with two accidents and the death of five people in a comparatively short time, it is glaring, it is jarring, and it deserves all the attention and all the energy we can devote to it to see what we should be doing by way of legislation and regulation to prevent the recurrence of such tragic situations.

I asked the officials I was meeting with from Inco what happened at Levack. Obviously, we can draw only general conclusions, and certainly none of us would want to prejudice the findings of any coroner's jury or any other full investigation, but it would appear from what we do know that this accident was not a pit-head accident. The men were actually engaged in a kind of maintenance work, as opposed to being at the lead end, the working end of the mine, if you will, and as was alluded to by my colleague the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce), who spent many years in the mines and knows more about them than most of us, the gates opened on a hopper full of rocks.

The question remains then, I guess, and the investigations will have to determine, whether the rock should have been in that hopper and stored in that way when there were workers hundreds of feet below it doing maintenance work. So, as it appears, the gates opened and these men, hundreds of feet below, were crushed by tons of rock.

I did not see it. My friend the member for Sudbury went to the mine. I know the minister, the Premier and others went, and indeed, my friends the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) and the member for Sudbury East may actually have been at the site. I am sure it is a terrible thing to see the faces of the co-workers, the relatives and others anxiously awaiting the

news from below and seeing the outcome of such a terrible accident.

What should we be doing? I have to say to the minister that we were not very happy that on the last day of the last session he brought in a proposal, a draft for amendments he may bring forward. He has had numerous suggestions on the table that I and other members of the House felt could have been moved along before now.

We are troubled too at the very different information we are receiving and the different conclusions that are being drawn, let us say, from the McKenzie-Laskin report on the one hand and the memorandum to the minister from the advisory council on the other hand. I want to quote what the advisory committee of the minister is telling him:

"The promise of an improvement in the future wellbeing of workers implied in the royal commission report has, for the most part, gone unfulfilled. Accident and fatality rates recorded by the WCB remain intolerably high. Furthermore, there is no consensus that the internal responsibility system is functioning effectively or that alone it can realistically be expected to act as an instrument for change."

The leaked document goes on to talk about a deteriorating situation in terms of the co-operation between labour and management and the ability of the ministry to co-operate with both labour and management to come to some answers. It says the situation has deteriorated to the type of situation that preceded the Ham commission some 10 years ago and the kind of frustration, the kind of anger that led to the kinds of debates we have had more recently and indeed to the introduction of Bill 149.

The minister is probably saying: "Fine. What should we do then?" What he should do first is to allow that bill to come forward, and encourage it to come forward, for consideration by a committee. I would hope he would do that. At the time we debated that bill, I said to my colleague the member for Sudbury East that I did not agree with each and every aspect of Bill 149, but frankly, who cares? The way the process works around here is that when a piece of legislation comes forward, it goes to committee, and at that time, all of us have an opportunity to review it and make the changes that may be necessary. But if we are all sitting around, particularly those of us in opposition who have ideas or plans for the improvement of situations in this province, and all they do is go to a second reading debate and then go to oblivion, what have we accomplished?

It may well be that if and, I hope, when the bill of the member for Sudbury East goes to a committee, my colleagues and I will be moving some amendments to it, but the bill should be reviewed in depth at the committee level. Indeed, the draft recommendations put forward by the minister should be brought forward as a piece of legislation as quickly as possible so it can be reviewed and possibly amended. The kind of vague allusion to work-place health and safety that we had in the throne speech is not enough in and of itself. We are past that. We do not need a reminder that there is a serious situation and that something has to be done. We knew that six months ago, and the minister knew it or he would not have appointed McKenzie-Laskin. We all knew it or the private member's bill would not have come forward. We are really past that. We are at the stage now where we should be going through clause by clause on whatever it is that we are going to put in place to try to address these situations. I encourage the minister to do it.

In a previous incarnation, the minister used to be criticized from time to time for being too pro-labour on health and safety matters. I have been criticized during my tenure as Labour critic for being too pro-labour on health and safety matters.

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Mr. Wildman: You cannot be too pro-labour.

Mr. Gillies: I have to agree with my friend the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman). I have to agree and tell him that any criticism in the health and safety area that says I am too pro-labour I take as a compliment, because I believe this is one area where urgent and pressing action has to be taken.

Mr. Warner: I will see the member on the picket line.

Mr. Gillies: I have been on a few picket lines, I tell my friend. Some of his people did not always like it when I turned up, but I was there.

I urge the minister to take the comments that are being made today in the most serious vein possible. I know that he does treat this very seriously and that an accident such as that at Levack troubles him as much as it troubles any of us. I urge him to accommodate the opposition's request for a full consideration of the private member's bill. I urge him to accommodate a full review of the McKenzie-Laskin report by the members of this House. I urge him to bring his draft recommendations forward on an urgent basis so they can be amended and brought into legislation. Let us do what we can.

We know one glaring thing: last year there were some 240 deaths in the work place in this province, and that was a dramatic increase over 170-odd the year previous. It is a situation, regardless of politics, that none of us can or should tolerate.

Ms. Caplan: I rise to participate in this debate with the knowledge that my colleagues should know—and I believe do know—that the government is working to enhance the provincial occupational health and safety system.

The Minister of Labour has clearly made occupational health and safety his top priority since assuming office. As members know, there have been very active legislative and regulatory programs in this area. There has also been a great deal of attention paid to very important administrative reform.

As was mentioned yesterday in the speech from the throne, one of the highest priorities of this government has been to ensure that existing statutes are firmly and fairly administered. In the health and safety field, I believe the Minister of Labour found cases where poor conditions were permitted to continue too long before tough action was taken.

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order.

Ms. Caplan: I believe the minister responded by putting his mark on the policies regarding the issuance of orders, protection and prosecutions.

In the new orders policy promulgated in November 1985, the minister eliminated the practice of repeat orders. Employers were given a fair chance to rectify contraventions under the policy. Failure to comply with deadlines set in the orders results in the issuance of a notice that the employer is liable to prosecution for failure to comply with provisions of the act or a regulation.

As a result of this government's policy of firm but fair enforcement of the act, the number of cases referred by the occupational health and safety division to the legal services branch has more than doubled. I think that is very significant. There was a 39 per cent increase in 1984-85 and 1985-86 and a further 94 per cent increase from 1985-86 to 1986-87. That is a significant result of this new policy. The new policy requires time limits on all orders. This reduces the chances that orders will be ignored and enhances follow-up by the inspectorate.

The minister has also put in place new policies concerning complaints and notifications of inspections. These policies provide the inspectorate with uniform and consistent guidance. While they respect and reinforce the responsibilities of

the work place parties, they again highlight the minister's commitment to protect the health of workers in this province. For instance, an inspector is required to investigate a complaint and protect the anonymity of the complainant. I believe the ability to complain with anonymity is fundamental within this process.

Where the internal responsibility system has failed to take appropriate and corrective action, the minister's policy continues to be no notification of inspections except where the minister is satisfied that the health and safety of workers would be protected by that notification. Only after careful review of a comprehensive set of factors, most important of which is the health and safety record of a company, will the minister approve notification.

The minister has just issued a new appeal procedure that is designed to ensure that it provides the parties with a hearing as soon as practicable. The ministry is committed to the principle that a hearing should be scheduled as soon as practicable following a reasonably short, and let me repeat "short," period in which the parties to the appeal are provided with an opportunity to settle the matter.

These are just some of the administrative enhancements I am referring to. When this government took office, it found that the resources devoted to occupational health and safety programs had been seriously eroded. The program did not have the resources to deliver the services required to enforce the act in a firm but fair way. It certainly did not have the resources, and we acknowledge that, to deliver a health and safety program that could meet the expectations of society and the expectations of this new government.

Since June 1985, the present government has allocated some 215 new positions and about \$11 million to the program in the following way: 43 positions to increase the number of inspections on construction sites; 54 positions to increase inspections for the industrial sector; 52 positions to provide greater occupational and health service, particularly in connection with designated substances; seven positions to establish a designated-substances enforcement unit; nine positions to enhance the capacity of the legal services branch to deal with an increasing number of prosecutions—that is particularly significant; it was very important that the legal services branch be able to deal with these increasing numbers of enforcements—and 10 positions to enhance the mining, health and safety branch.

Finally, the ministry is actively pursuing implementation of a major set of administrative recommendations made to it earlier this year through the comprehensive management audit that was done. All of this activity is helping to make, I believe, for positive and progressive change in this field.

The accident that occurred is unacceptable within the standards in Ontario. We are not here today to debate a private member's bill. We will have the opportunity when it is before the committee and when it comes back to this House for full and open debate. That is the procedure and the process in this House. In the meantime, I believe this minister has made significant progress in strengthening the enforcement, in seeing that we have prosecutions—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order.

Ms. Caplan: I believe this type of debate is too important to have that kind of hooting and hollering coming from across the floor. It is my view and the view on this side that at this time—

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker: Order. You will have an opportunity to voice your opinion, each one of you, if you so wish. Please add one more minute for the member for Oriole.

Ms. Caplan: It is distressing that in a debate of this nature we have this kind of behaviour in this House. When we have accidents to discuss and the opportunity to discuss the process for the future, the progress that has been made and the commitment of this government to occupational health and safety, I find it particularly distressing that members of this House do not have the courtesy to listen as a member is addressing this chamber.

1650

As I was saying, the minister has acknowledged that the situation in 1985 needed significant improvement, and there have been significant changes and improvement. Additional resources have been added so that the ministry could actively monitor the inspections. The percentage increase in the numbers of prosecutions is significant, and it is only through inspection monitoring and prosecution that labour will be satisfied that the ministry is, in fact, participating to the fullest, to ensure the health and safety of workers.

The criticism that has come to the minister, I believe, is unjust. I believe he is responding in a positive way and I believe the members of this House should be acknowledging that. It is one

thing to criticize legitimately; it is something else when we are dealing with an issue of lives, where we have had a tragic accident, where we recognize that the minister has made the kinds of efforts over the past two years to seek the kinds of improvements that we have wanted to see in this province for some time.

I would like to take this opportunity on a personal basis to express my condolences to those families and co-workers who were so affected by the tragedy in Sudbury. Through the kinds of initiatives that our minister is taking, we will try to ensure that tragedies such as that become history and a thing of the past.

We can never foresee the kind of tragic or freak accidents that may happen, but we have to ensure we have the strongest and toughest legislation we can have so that the workers of this province will be protected in the work place and have the knowledge that the Minister of Labour is doing everything in his power to ensure the safety of their work place.

Mr. Laughren: I will attempt to speak in measured tones following that condescending speech from the member for Oriole; condescending perhaps because I was watching the Liberal caucus squirm over there as this debate goes on. They are squirming because, to a member, they did not want this debate to take place this afternoon. It is difficult for us to sit here and hear all those sympathetic noises coming from that caucus when its members did not even want to have a debate this afternoon.

I just heard the member refer to "tragic or freak accidents." I want to tell the member there is nothing freakish about an accident when there are four people down a shaft and somebody else working up above them with a loaded hopper of ore. There is nothing freakish about that, only tragic and irresponsible.

This debate is a matter of urgent public importance because the whole question of health and safety in Ontario is in a state of crisis. While I expect the members of government to rally behind their minister, I must tell them that changes have to be made. This minister has dismissed our calls for a new era in safety and health; he has dismissed my colleague's private member's bill; he has dismissed the call for a royal commission into the workers' compensation system in Ontario. He thinks there is no crisis in health and safety in Ontario.

It is fine for the minister to refer to the four miners who were killed at Levack a couple of weeks ago, the one at Crean Hill before that or the one last August. He makes no reference ever

to the ones who are dying slowly as a result of having worked in the mines. That seems to have been forgotten, whether it is asbestos or whether it is nickel, gold or uranium mines.

This is not just an opposition party speaking. I hope that every single member of the Liberal caucus will read the minister's own advisory committee report on what it thinks of the minister's stewardship in the Ministry of Labour, because it is a severe condemnation of his administration. The minister can do no less than what the advisory committee is asking.

The minister must know by now that he is extremely isolated as the Minister of Labour. Organized labour has lost its confidence in him. That is clear. It is not debatable any more; it is clear.

His own advisory committee has issued this indictment of the minister and the way he runs his ministry. That same advisory committee is refusing to continue to review each of the proposed designated-substance regulations. That is serious. When I was talking about people who die slowly on the job, I meant the people who die as a result of being exposed to those kinds of substances.

The employers in Ontario are calling for a royal commission into workers' compensation. The inspection branch of the Ministry of Labour is filled with discontent and frustration. The minister himself is simply immersed in a swamp of unhappiness and downright distrust and anger.

I believe the minister has come to the end of his road. He began his task with much promise and very high expectations, but that promise has been broken and those expectations have been dashed. The stakes are high. We should make no mistake about it. This is a very ideological battle between labour and capital, and the sides are lining up.

The question is whether it is the right of the owners of capital to allocate that capital in the work place or whether labour has the right to have a say in where that capital will be allocated and how much of it will be allocated when lives are at stake. This is what this battle is all about.

We are not simply engaged in a bad debate over too much government intervention or no government intervention or the traditional struggle between big labour and big capital. It is not that kind of debate any more. We are truly engaged in a debate as to whether or not labour has the right to protect itself on the job. When you cut through all the verbiage, that is what it comes down to. It is whether or not labour has the right to protect itself from injury, sickness and

death on the job. That is why this battle has become so fierce.

If it offends the sensitivities of some of the members of the Liberal caucus, then that is too bad, but they must know by now that it is not just an ordinary debate. There is much more at stake than that.

We believe that despite all this minister's pronouncements and his posturing he is determined to hold the line, and the owners of capital will still decide where that capital will be expended on the job. He is prepared only to tinker with the system, despite the awful toll that clearly results from such a strategy.

I do not wish to be melodramatic but I, like many of my constituents and, indeed, many people in the entire Sudbury basin and elsewhere, am sick and tired of attending work-accident funerals and memorial services for our friends and neighbours. In the past month, I have had four constituents die. One who was a very close personal friend died last August. Every time there is an accident, the widows of those workers suffer all over again. They suffer through the day and night and the following days because they know what the other families are going through.

I do believe that in this high-technology age, which we are all so proud of, we should be anticipating the possibility of preventing virtually every single work place accident and death, but it will happen only if health and safety is given an extremely high priority by both government and industry.

I will tell the members that it is clearly not a high priority of industry, when industry comes before committees of this Legislature and expresses its grave concerns over the high cost of compensation in Ontario.

It is not a priority of this government either. It simply is not. The minister can shake his head all he likes; it is simply not a priority of this government. What is a priority of this government within the Ministry of Labour is bureaucratic tinkering. It is time this province became a leader in either the protection of workers on the job or a major display of dissatisfaction with its laws by working people all across the province.

1700

I would suggest to the minister that unless he is prepared to make health and safety a top priority, not just of his ministry but also of his government, there is going to be dissatisfaction expressed in every work shop, on every work floor, in every mine, in every factory and in every office in the years to come. It will not

happen overnight, but I really do believe a dissatisfaction will set in out there and people will not put up with it any more.

I do not believe we have to tolerate the present toll of accidents and deaths in the work place. I do not believe it for one minute. But I listened to the speeches this afternoon from over there and they were all defensive. Oh, they all make the right sympathetic noises at the right time, but I have not heard a single member over there say he wishes to change the system so that the labour movement, the workers on the job, can determine what capital will be expended in order to clean up the work place. I have not heard one member over there say that, not one, because they still believe in their heart of hearts that the owners of the businesses, the bosses in the work place, have the right to allocate expenditures to determine what will be spent on health and safety.

I am waiting for the day when a Liberal member will stand up and say that labour has the right to determine priorities regarding health and safety in the work place. When that day comes, I will believe the government is starting to understand that health and safety should be a priority in the work place. Until that, it is a charade.

Mr. Bernier: I join this debate as one of the members who have a strong mining component within their riding.

I first want to express my deepest sympathy to the families of those four miners in the Sudbury area who lost their lives recently in a tragic mining accident, which we were told was a freak accident that should never have happened. To the families of René Bédard, Germain St-Amour, Wilbrod Gauvin and Donald Knight, I extend my deepest sympathies.

As one who has the great Red Lake mining basin in his riding, I am aware of the tragedy, sorrow and anguish that come to a community when such an accident occurs. I know the heartache, and, like other members from the Sudbury basin, I know what it is like to attend those funerals. I know the anguish and frustration that exist among all of us because of the lack of tougher rules, better inspection, better co-operation and a movement to improve the work place, which generally one sometimes feels are just nonexistent.

As one who has been very close to the Minister of Labour's responsibilities in the past, I have to say there have been some great changes within the government operation. I remember when the mining health and safety branch was in

the Ministry of Natural Resources and there was a strong move by the labour movement to have it moved from the Ministry of Natural Resources to the Ministry of Labour, where I think it properly belongs. I am glad I was part of that process.

I am pleased to have been part of the process to set up the Royal Commission on the Health and Safety of Workers in Mines. In fact, I had the pleasure of appointing the commissioner, James Ham, to do this important task, and his excellent report has been around for some considerable time. Many of the recommendations have been put into place, but, as other members have pointed out, there is still much to be done.

We have heard from this government in the last two years; I remember vividly, the minister being on this side of the House, how he used to chastise on many occasions the then Minister of Labour responsible for this area about his lack of concern. Now that he has that responsibility, I know he is grappling with it. I wish he could be a little more sincere. He could get more funds. I know the whole mining health and safety branch has been expanded. Inspectors have been increased and additional funds and resources have been provided, but there is still room to improve.

We have heard on a number of occasions that there would be new health and occupational safety legislation introduced. We heard it in 1985; we heard it in 1986; and now we have heard it again in 1987. It is getting to be that a year is just not complete without a promise from this government for new occupational health and safety legislation. Mr. Speaker, those of us on this side of the House and, I suspect, members of your own caucus are becoming more frustrated each day as the delay in moving in this direction goes on.

I do not want to prolong the debate, but I want to lend support to the introducers of this resolution for an emergency debate to urge the minister and the government to get on with the job. We cannot stand this needless waste of human lives because of the lack of proper inspection, co-operation and good legislation that has teeth and that will force the companies to do the right thing and the inspectors to tighten up their role on a much more efficient basis.

I plead with the minister, as other members have done, to get on with the job. We know it is difficult for him, but when we are dealing with lives, I think the resources should be made available to him to do it. When the minister comes up with a strong, sensible piece of legislation, I can assure him that those of us on

this side of the House will be eager to support him.

Mr. Polsinelli: I would like to make my contribution to this emergency debate by discussing the status and initiatives related to the provincial inquiry into ground control and emergency preparedness, which illustrates, I believe, this government's resolve in dealing with hazards in the mining industry.

Following the death of four miners at Falconbridge Nickel Mines due to a rock blast on June 20, 1984, and other incidents related to ground instability in underground mines, a labour-management-government inquiry was established in October 1984. The committee was to report on appropriate changes regarding ground control and emergency preparedness systems in the mining industry.

On March 25, 1986, in Sudbury, the Minister of Labour released the committee's final report, which contained 60 recommendations made under nine subject areas. These areas were research, training, education, communications, mine design, planning, emergency preparedness, lighting, monitoring, instrumentation and some miscellaneous areas.

The committee made over 60 recommendations, and I would like to discuss the status of 11 of the key points.

The committee called for the establishment of a research institute in ground control to co-ordinate ongoing and additionally recommended research. The Ontario Mining Association has set up a research directorate in Sudbury, with representation on the board of directors from labour, industry and the provincial and federal governments.

The committee called for improved training for miners, supervisors, worker inspectors and nonminers working underground. This is being implemented through the mining tripartite committee on training. This, by the way, is an industry-labour consultative group working through the Ministry of Skills Development in co-operation with the Ministry of Labour.

The committee called for improved rock mechanics programs in colleges and universities in Ontario. Chairs have been established at Laurentian University of Sudbury, Queen's University and the University of Toronto, and a review of post-secondary education was set up to examine issues such as declining enrolment, industry training and implementation of the inquiry's recommendations regarding education and training. This report, known as the Ross report, was recently released by the Premier.

The committee further called for improved communications between all parties at the work place for routine and emergency situations, and improved communications equipment. The Mining Legislative Review Committee has proposed a regulation to address communications in the work place. In fact, this consultative body is meeting today as we speak to finalize the wording of the regulation to be recommended to the minister.

1710

The committee recommended more emphasis on the technical aspects of mine design with respect to rock mechanics, and the MLRC has in this morning's session agreed unanimously to a proposed regulation requiring that the ground stability be assessed in the mine design on an annual basis or more often.

The committee also requested expanded mine rescue training and equipment for other than fire emergencies. Members will be happy to know that a tripartite technical advisory committee has been set up and is analysing various types of emergencies to identify the required equipment or the required skills.

The committee also asked for improved first aid qualifications and regulations as they apply to underground mining. A subcommittee of the MLRC is preparing a proposal. Once accepted, the proposal will either be incorporated in the Workers' Compensation Board regulations, which, by the way, are currently under review, or in the mining regulations.

The committee requested the establishment of new mine lighting standards within one year of the publication of the committee's report, and the MLRC has proposed a new regulation that addresses this recommendation.

The committee requested better use of underground monitoring equipment, especially where rock-bursts have been experienced. Members will also be happy to know that a joint federal-provincial research program is developing improved rock-burst monitoring systems.

The 10th recommendation the committee made was that it wanted an expansion of the role of the Ministry of Labour in reviewing ground control designs and procedures, and a miners' health and safety centre will be part of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines' mining and minerals research centre, which is being sited at Laurentian University in Sudbury. This facility will improve the audit and support role of the Ministry of Labour. The ministry, by the way, has hired one new ground control engineer and is presently recruiting for a second.

Finally, the committee has called for a mandatory fall-on protection system on all vehicles operating in areas requiring this type of protection, and the MLRC has proposed a new regulation that addresses this recommendation.

More specifically, I would like to re-emphasize the government action in this area. Regulation changes have been referred to the tripartite Mining Legislative Review Committee. At its meeting today, the MLRC is discussing regulations proposals related to the recommendations on underground mining lighting, the falling-object protection systems, training, mine design and communications, and the government will act on these recommendations expeditiously.

On July 30, 1986, the Premier announced the establishment of a chair in rock mechanics and ground control at Laurentian University with cross-assignment to Queen's University. That was a \$1-million expenditure. On July 31, the Premier initiated a review of post-secondary education and training requirements in mining engineering and technology in Ontario. This review is currently being headed by C. B. Ross, who is an engineer, and the issues being examined are declining enrolment, industry training requirements and implementation of the Stevenson recommendations regarding education and training. The report was released last week.

The national forum on rock mechanics education will be held in Sudbury in 1988. It has been arranged by the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, with support provided by the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities.

Improved training for miners, supervisors, workers, inspectors and nonminers working underground is being addressed by the mining tripartite committee on training. Changes to the common core and additional training programs required by section 10 of the mining regulations will be forthcoming this year. The MLRC has proposed an amendment to broaden the applicability of section 10. As well, amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act will broaden the requirements for worker training in the industry generally.

A technical advisory committee on mine rescue has been set up with representation from the Ontario Mining Association, the United Steelworkers of America and the Sudbury Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union. This committee is currently reviewing various types of

emergencies at mines, towards improving the emergency response capability in Ontario.

The Workers' Compensation Board has been contacted concerning the first aid regulations made under the Workers' Compensation Act. A tripartite technical subcommittee of the MLRC has been formed and is reviewing the recommendations concerning first aid qualifications and regulations as they apply to underground mining.

A miners' health and safety centre will be established to incorporate the wire rope lab, ground control, mine rescue and other technical support functions of the mining health and safety branch. This will be part of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines' mining and mineral research centre announced by the Premier on July 30, 1986, to be located in Sudbury.

I have heard much today of the failure of the consultation process, in that it is not meeting the needs of workers in the area of occupational health and safety. Two of the biggest critics, the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) and the member for Nickel Belt, have obviously not deemed this emergency debate important enough to listen to the balance of it.

In any event, within the mining industry, the MLRC, the mining tripartite committee on training and the action taken with respect to the provincial inquiry into ground control are proof positive that the consultation is indeed proceeding and proceeding expeditiously, with significant results.

While tragedies such as the recent Levack incident and the multiple deaths at Falconbridge three years ago underscore the need for constant vigilance and improvements in mining health and safety, the record of the industry has shown dramatic improvement in the past five years. This government, particularly this Liberal government, is committed to decreasing further the lost-time accident rates and to adopting measures in co-operation with industry and labour to ensure that the tragedies of the kind we are considering today will never happen again.

Mr. McClellan: I take no pleasure in joining in this debate this afternoon. Over the course of the 12 years I have been a member of this Legislature, we have had many debates on the same subject. I want to take a few minutes to go over some of the history and some of the background.

As is indicated in the wording of the motion for an emergency debate, there is a connection between what happened in Sudbury this past month, where five workers at Inco lost their lives in two separate accidents, and the report of the

Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety, which was released today by my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel). There is a connection.

In 1978, this Legislature, acting on the recommendations of the Ham royal commission, passed Bill 70. All of us who were members at that time passed it in good faith. It was not perfect, but we gave it the benefit of the doubt and hoped and prayed that it would work to reduce the carnage in the work place in Ontario.

Now, 10 years later, we are able to see clearly, without any confusion, that Bill 70 was not good enough in the first place and that the underlying principles and assumptions of Bill 70 were simply not adequate to stop the carnage in the work place. Second, there has been, and there is no way to describe it except in these harsh terms, a process of systematic sabotage of the implementation of the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

I wish that the Minister of Labour and his colleagues could simply stand up and admit that truth and admit that reality. That process of sabotage has resulted in a failure to enforce the act; in failure right across the board, a complete failure of the regulatory mechanism of the act, from the inspection branch through to the failure to prosecute adequately. That failure has continued, even to the date of this report, which is not dated June 1985 when the government changed. It is dated March 25, 1987.

The failure continues as we stand here debating the tragedies in Sudbury. It continues. We have to start by recognizing that failure. It is a failure that the minister must accept responsibility for because it is a failure of the Ministry of Labour. It says in this report in clear and unequivocal terms that the Ministry of Labour, and the minister under our system, is responsible for that failure.

1720

Instead of talking about five deaths, I wonder whether it might make some impact if we were talking about five executives going to jail some year, if we had a prosecution system that sent those responsible to jail. One of the recommendations of the January 1987 Law Reform Commission of Canada report on work place pollution recommended that endangering life by work place pollution be made a criminal offence under the Criminal Code of Canada. I wonder what effect that would have on some of the irresponsible management practices that we see time after time in the work places of this province.

The extent of the problem is just starting to be documented. Earlier, during the Workers' Compensation Board estimates, the minister released a report by Dr. Annalee Yassi on occupational disease in Ontario that had been suppressed for three years. It was suppressed by the previous government and it was suppressed by the Liberal government until it was forced to release it about a month ago. I have no doubt that one of the reasons it was suppressed is that it deals with the extent of occupational deaths in the province.

The minister can grimace and try to disavow with his body language what I am saying, but on page 17 of the report it says "five to 10 per cent of cardio-vascular deaths and 15 to 25 per cent of cancer deaths and 10 per cent of pulmonary deaths in the province of Ontario are reasonably attributable to occupational disease. By extrapolation, that adds up to a total of 6,000 deaths a year in the province. That is from three conditions, based on a very conservative reading of the scientific literature. The Workers' Compensation Board will compensate probably something between 40 and 50 occupational deaths per year out of a total potential of some 6,000.

We are not even beginning to come to grips with this phenomenon. What we are dealing with today is trying to get the ministry to deal with death by accident, and we have had 10 years of failure on that. We have not even begun to come to grips with death by occupational disease.

I have mentioned this a number of times in the House and on the fall of the previous government I referred to this disgrace: In 1977, the ministry promised and produced a list of 50 hazardous and toxic substances that it intended to designate under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. It set out a timetable for 22 substances in 1980-81, 10 substances for 1981-82, 12 substances for 1982-83, and 10 substances for 1983-84. We know what the record was. At the time the previous government fell, as of June 1985, nine substances had been designated. Since the new government has taken office, my understanding is that three out of these 50 toxic substances have been added to the list. There now is a total of 12, with arsenic in 1986, X-rays in 1986 and ethylene oxide in 1987.

After 10 years, with literally thousands of toxic chemicals and toxic substances in factories and work places all across Ontario, the Ministry of Labour, under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, has managed to designate a total of 12. It is a matter that should be regarded by the minister, his deputies and his senior staff as an

abject disgrace and an abject failure. We have not heard a thing from the minister as to what he intends to do about reforming the process of hazardous-substance designation, not a thing, and we have the Yassi report indicating a minimum of 6,000 deaths a year in this province. We have not begun to pay attention to the cause of these deaths. We have not begun to protect workers from exposure to these toxins or poisonous chemicals and agents because we have not even identified the level of toxicity for other than a miserable 11.

It is hard to know what to say during this kind of debate. It is hard to know how to make sense out of this kind of nonsense and how to make sense out of the kinds of things ministers and members are saying.

These are not tragic, freak accidents. These are preventable accidents. We on this side of the House are speaking as strongly as we are because we know the government can do something about stopping this carnage in the work place with will, determination and confidence, and it is about time the government started to show a single measure of competence on this issue.

Mr. Pollock: I am not pleased to take part in this debate but there are a few things I want to put on the record.

I have mines in my riding, and I want to make sure they are safe and also assure the safety of the miners who work in those mines. I have the deepest sympathy for those miners who died in the Sudbury area and every step should be taken to see that a tragedy such as that does not happen again.

I am concerned about health and safety in the work place, and the fact that we have one death every working day is totally unacceptable. I made a statement in this House on one occasion for a young person from my riding, only 17 years old, who was crushed beneath a pop cooler. I recommended at that time that those pop coolers be stabilized to the wall or the floor. Because this was an accidental death, there was an inquiry. The jury recommended too that this is what should take place, that these pop coolers be stabilized to the wall or to the floor. There have been at least four deaths in Ontario that I know of in those particular circumstances, that have been caused by pop coolers tipping over on individuals. I am reasonably sure the pop coolers in these government complexes around here, in these buildings, are not stabilized to the wall.

As I say, every precaution should be taken to have health and safety in our work places; in any place as far as that is concerned.

I have also witnessed people using cutting torches and not having their safety goggles on. One chunk of slag could hit your eye and it would totally ruin that eye for the rest of your life. Also, I know of situations where there are people working on logging trucks with running shoes on, not wearing their safety boots. Situations such as that should be inspected and they should be wearing their safety boots.

I supported Bill 149 so that bill could go to committee and we could sit down and talk about health and safety in the work place. I think it is a good thing to be able to do that and to try to get a handle on these tragic deaths we have in the work place.

1730

Mr. Ramsay: When the present government took office in June 1985, it was obvious that the health and safety legislation could be improved to provide workers with additional rights to know about toxic substances. The Minister of Labour played an instrumental role in forging a national consensus on the work place hazardous materials information system, WHMIS.

In January 1986, the government introduced Bill 101 imposing fundamental improvements to workers and the community right to know about toxic substances. Bill 101 would require the labelling of products used in the work place and the provision of the training of workers concerning hazards and protective measures. The bill also provides for the development of an inventory of toxic substances that would be available to workers and the community. This proposed right goes beyond the WHMIS provisions.

Following the introduction of the bill, the Minister of Labour was a leading force in the negotiations that culminated in a national agreement. The agreement cleared the roadblocks on the remaining issues of trade secrets and funding so that the federal and provincial governments now will move in concert to enhance the information available to workers about toxic substances.

The Minister of Labour is reviewing drafts of the proposed federal legislation. The provincial government will re-introduce Bill 101 with appropriate amendments to ensure consistency with the national scheme as soon as the details of the federal legislation are final. However, the amendment bill will retain the additional component of the inventory, of providing the community right to know.

The Minister of Labour has tabled draft amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Issues such as enhanced penalties,

increased scope of joint health and safety committees and expanded training requirements are included in this package. The review of the act underscores the government's commitment to enhance the rights and responsibilities of work place parties to protect the health and safety of workers. It also emphasizes the government's resolve to take vigorous action when those responsibilities are not met. Ministry officials are reviewing the comments and briefs on this draft bill and will prepare amendments for introduction into the House for this coming session.

In the 22 months since the Minister of Labour took office, the occupational health and safety division has undertaken a comprehensive set of initiatives to regulate health and safety hazards. Let us first consider the control of toxic substances. This is a complex policy area that required a thorough review by the new government.

The Minister of Labour established a strategy to improve the protection afforded to workers exposed to these agents. The components of this strategy are the establishment of enforceable exposure limits for a large number of toxic substances; the reduction of the time period over which the exposure limits are measured; the establishment of a tight timetable for the regulation of designated substances; and an increase in the number of substances designated through a revised approach of generic designated substance regulation.

First and foremost among the achievements in implementing this program is the regulation concerning toxic substances that took effect on December 6, 1986. The regulation sets exposure limits for some 600 chemical and biological agents. Exceedence of the exposure limits constitutes an offence that may result in prosecution and a penalty being imposed by the courts. The regulation also requires employers to observe these limits over a work day as well as a work week. This improves the protection afforded workers and enhances the enforcement of the regulation.

The ministry intends to establish a review process so that labour and management can work with the ministry to consider revisions to the exposure limits for substances where the scientific evidence indicates that change is appropriate. The Minister of Labour established a tight timetable for the development of designated substances regulations. As a result, the regulation of asbestos on construction projects and in building and repair operations took effect in March 1986. The arsenic regulation was put into

effect in March 1986 and the ethylene oxide regulation in March 1987.

There are currently three regulations nearing completion. These are formaldehyde, silica on construction projects and an amendment on the regulation respecting mercury. There are four proposed regulations that will be completed in the coming months. These are cadmium, chromium, coal tar products on construction projects and lead on construction projects.

A number of other initiatives are in progress, including proposed amendments to both the regulation respecting asbestos and the regulation of asbestos on construction projects and in buildings and repair operations. The noise regulation is still under consideration. A detailed work plan for 1987 has been developed.

A critical component of the division's development of designated substances regulations is the ministry's commitment to increase the number of substances designated. The ministry intends to consult with the parties on the development of a revised approach to generic designated substances regulations.

It is conceivable that rather than having separate regulations to cover solvents, irritants and carcinogens, a single regulation could set out the appropriate controls.

The ministry looks forward to working with members of labour and management in establishing a mechanism to select substances for the designation and reviewing the process whereby the regulations are designated.

The ministry is also committed to improving the administration of the existing 12 designated substance regulations. Where the improvements require regulatory amendments, action will be taken. For example, the regulation amending 10 designated substances regulations requires that all existing exposure limits be calculated on an eight-hour as well as on a 40-hour basis.

This is in keeping with the new regulation on toxic substances and the most recent designated substance regulations. Additional changes concerning medical surveillance will be proposed shortly to clarify the role of the positions.

The ministry has commissioned a review of the regulations with regard to other changes which could enhance the protection afforded to workers. The ministry is currently considering changes to the regulations and expects to publish the proposed changes for public review later this year.

Finally, the ministry is nearing completion of a review of the exposure limits for the lead and asbestos regulations. Proposals to amend those

regulations will be announced in the coming months.

Safety matters have also received attention from the new administration. Regulations respecting commercial diving, offshore drilling for oil and gas, crane operators and X-ray safety were filed in October 1986.

In addition, comprehensive reviews of the construction and mining regulations have been undertaken. Aspects of these regulations will be amended following careful consideration and consultation with labour and management.

In addition, in January 1987, proposed amendments to the electrical provisions of the industrial mining and construction regulations were circulated for comment. The ministry has initiated a review of other aspects of the industrial regulations. The work place parties will be consulted on the proposed changes to these regulations later on this year.

Mr. Rae: I think I can say honestly that there really is no subject about which I feel more genuinely disappointed, as a member of the Legislature and as leader of my party, with respect to what has happened over the past two years.

We entered that period and that change of government under no illusions as to what was going to happen or how difficult it would be to get some movement from a party which, frankly, has not traditionally been deeply concerned with this question and really had no gut feeling about the problem at hand.

We attempted through the accord to provide some kind of leadership. If I may say so, by appointing the member for Sudbury East as the critic in this area, we attempted to give the issue the kind of focus and drive which would produce a response from government.

We were under no illusions as to how easy that would be. We saw a Labour ministry in disarray. We have seen a minister whose weakness I think has now become common parlance among those with whom he has to deal. We have a problem that simply will not go away and that is getting more severe and serious. We have a daily litany of people who are being killed in the work place and people who are dying as a result of toxic poisoning.

There has been one consistent response from the Labour ministry, from the Minister of Labour and from the government to the extraordinary campaign which my colleague from Sudbury East has led so effectively and eloquently and in which others of us in the party have joined in terms of trying to give this issue some focus and

direction, working with the labour movement and those whose lives are on the line.

Indeed, that response has been carried out in all the speeches that we have heard this afternoon from the spokesmen for the Liberal Party. Initially, that response has been to belittle the efforts of the member for Sudbury East by saying that he did not know what he was talking about and to say that the problem is not there. It was precisely the response of the Minister of Labour today, saying that there was somehow a constituency out there that was not supportive of Bill 149 but that was supportive of his measures, to which I can only say to the minister, show us the names of the labour councils opposed to Bill 149 and in favour of his bill and of the members of the health and safety committees across the province who are opposed to Bill 149.

1740

I say to the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay), I say to other members who have spoken, that they should talk to the local unions in their constituencies, in the mining industry, wherever it may be, about how they feel about Bill 149 and then come into the House and say that the member for Sudbury East does not have the support of the labour movement and does not know what he is talking about.

Every single major thrust of the campaign has been denied and belittled by the government. Yet, as in so many other questions, it is the experience—in this case, the tragic experience—of working people which puts the lie to the government. It is not a question of adding up the statistics on one side and saying, "These are the numbers that are right and your numbers are wrong." That is not what is important; what is important is the experience.

I see the Minister of Labour laughing, which is an appropriate response from the Minister of Labour. It is appropriate that he laugh, that he belittle, that he make fun of those who have been raising this issue, because that is the kind of response which he has to this question, that is the kind of response which his ministry has consistently shown on this question.

To deny the experience of working people, to say that they do not know what they are talking about is precisely the attitude of governments and, I might say, of workers' compensation boards, which say, equally consistently: "You are not in pain. The pain you are feeling you should not be feeling. It should not be there," and which deny consistently the validity of claims of people who come forward.

That perhaps explains the fact that in a throne speech of 49 pages which touched upon virtually every subject from soup to nuts, the one subject they were not even able to mention was the subject of workers' compensation.

We heard a more shameful admission from the member for Yorkview (Mr. Polsinelli). I would like to see him go back to his constituency at night and talk to the lines of cases I know he is talking to, as I am talking to, and explain to them why the government has nothing to say about workers' compensation.

The minister has a lot to answer for, but it goes beyond that. It is a ritual perhaps of the political game that parties call for the resignation of ministers. I have never felt more sincerely that we have to have basic change in the Ministry of Labour, that this change include change at the top, that we have to have change in legislation and that we have to have a fundamental change in attitude.

I want to say that the reports that have emerged, some of them suppressed for longer, some of them for shorter, periods—it was not the minister who released the report of the Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety; it was my colleague the member for Sudbury East—each one of them has confirmed the fact that there is a crisis and a problem. Each one of them, with the exception of McKenzie-Laskin, and that is an important exception—I am going to come to that—has emphasized the extent and the degree of the problem and each of them has spoken to the need for a fundamental change.

In response, we get the same old defensiveness, the same old ritualistic speeches prepared by civil servants and read out by members of the government from various constituencies, the same ritualistic listing of statistics and the same ritualistic listing of things that have been done and might be done and could be done and maybe will be done. Let that be the epitaph of the government of the Liberal Party of Ontario when it comes to this question.

Every accident is an exception. Every accident is one which gives rise to the speeches which, again, have become almost ritualistic, saying: "It is a tragedy. It was a freak accident." What do we do when we have freak accident after freak accident? What do we do when we have situations where the families know that accidents can be prevented and stopped? At what point does the government have the courage to say, "We have to deal with this question because these accidents can be prevented"? That is the tough issue.

To say that they are just natural calamities and tragedies is, if I may say so, the easy response. The tougher response for a government is to say, "What is especially tragic about these accidents is that they can be stopped." They can be stopped. We can stop toxic poisoning. We can stop the exposure of workers to substances which they know not.

We can deal with the problem of occupational cancer and heart disease, which is going to become one of the great, tremendous challenges of the 1980s and 1990s as we become more fully aware of the implications and the extent of this problem.

What is tragic is the inability of this government really to feel and understand the importance of this issue. What is tragic is the fact there are not executives and managers in jail because of the number of people who have died unnecessarily. That is the tragedy.

I am often reminded of the words of Archbishop Cardano, who said, "When I say many people are poor, they call me a saint, but when I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist."

I think the way in which our party has been treated and the way in which our arguments have been dealt with and the way in which the arguments of my colleague the member for Sudbury East have been dealt with by the Minister of Labour over the years are parallel to that, because the member for Sudbury East and our party do not simply speak the language of the tragedy. We speak the language that asks why. We demand to know why, and we demand to know how, and we say that if these things can be prevented, they are a double tragedy.

It is one thing for people to lose their lives when nothing could be done. It is one thing to be struck by lightning. It is another thing to be struck by a building that has been constructed in a faulty way. It is one thing to be struck down by some tragic disease whose origins we know nothing about. It is another thing to be struck down by a disease because people have been exposed to substances that should not have been there in the first place, and that is the issue.

That is why this government is in trouble on this question. That is why the people of Ontario are going to judge this government severely when it comes to this question, because these are deaths that need not have happened, that could have been stopped and that this government has not stopped.

Mr. Gordon: To sum up for our party, I would like to say that I think what happens in Legislatures and in governments is that too often

we forget we are talking about individuals. Too often government spends its time worrying about what institutions have to say, what lobby groups have to say, and we do not spend enough time looking at the individual and what it means when you have the kind of loss of life we have had over the past 12 months in the Sudbury region.

We have had six men who have lost their lives. The first one, Dick Irwin, was at Garson mine. As a result of that, of course, the Garson mine has been closed ever since, and it is still raising very deep concerns and questions about the whole matter of bulk mining within the mining industry. I know that is a matter the Minister of Labour has addressed. As a matter of fact, I believe he was up in Sudbury not too long ago talking about bulk mining, but there are still real concerns there, questions that have to be answered, and of course the answers will only come if the government has the commitment and the resolve to do something about it. That is something, my colleagues, that remains to be seen.

I must also say that perhaps we do not think often enough about what it means when a family loses the breadwinner. I do not think we think often enough what it means to the wife of a miner when she loses her partner, her love, her friend. And what does it mean to those children, those children who are not going to have a father there to help that mother and that family through those emotional times and through the trying times that all families have?

1750

I know my colleagues here in this Legislature are just as concerned and feel as deeply as I do about this issue, but I think what happens is that when the Minister of Labour goes back to his ministry and sits down with his civil servants, there are all kinds of reasons found, because of the various forces we have in our society, to make very small, incremental changes that really are not going to take the kinds of steps that are necessary to eliminate the number of deaths we have seen, not only in the mining industry but also in other walks of life and in other areas where people work.

I would say that while the tragedy we have experienced in the Sudbury region is one that has left all of us shaking our heads, one of the things that has happened at Inco is that the company and the union have come together and established what they call risk analysis teams, committees or groups to look at possible risks in all of Inco's mines, even in Garson mine which is currently closed down. They are looking at such things as what if this chute should fail? What about where

the ore is being stored? What if there is a mechanical breakdown? What if an air hose does not work? What if this valve gives way?

These kinds of requests to have these committees established in the mines were made many times in the past by the United Steelworkers of America or the other unions that represent mining people in this province. Unfortunately, their requests tended to be met with the kind of reply or stonewall that says: "What if this happens or what if that happens? That is too hard to do. We cannot do those kinds of things." The most recent tragedies have caused a rethinking within that mining corporation.

I think if the minister is going to make some real changes when it comes to health and safety and what happens to working people in the province, if he were to look at that risk analysis as something he could incorporate so that it would be something we would expect in every industry across this province, we would be going a long way towards cutting back and avoiding the kinds of accidents we see in the work place today.

Why should a man, when he leaves home, be facing the kinds of dangers he has been facing in Ontario in 1987? He should not; nor should the business people, for example, fear health and safety the way some of them do. How many times have we heard them come before committees that are discussing the issue of workers' compensation to complain about the kinds of levies that are being put on the business

community and about how much they have to pay? Yet if you have a safe environment for people to work in, it means industry is not going to have to pay that kind of money. It really saddens me in a sense. I hope this will help to dissuade some of those misguided lobby groups that have been sending letters to members of this House, chastising them for even acknowledging a private member's bill that deals with health and safety.

It is interesting that when one allows members to think for themselves, perhaps away from some of the discipline of party, many of them can come up with some very constructive, interesting bills that will be good for the people of Ontario. There are members of this House and people in Ontario who, without understanding the way our system works in this House and in committee, have been antagonistic to the bill, Bill 149, that has been presented. Naturally, we are not going to agree with every clause, but it has opened up a debate, and a debate that has been long overdue in this House.

The Acting Speaker: This concludes the debate.

The House stands adjourned, please notice, until 11 of the clock tomorrow morning, not 10 o'clock.

The House adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Thursday, April 30, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, April 30, 1987

The House met at 11 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Cousens moved resolution 2:

That in the opinion of this House, considering the dramatic increase in the number of terminal diseases such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), cancer and related illnesses; the present government is committed to an increased emphasis on community-based care versus institutionalized care for our frail and elderly population; the costs per day per patient in an institutional chronic or acute care setting greatly exceeds the cost per day of home-based community care; that approximately 95 per cent of all palliative care is administered in hospitals; and only 40 of our 220 hospitals currently offer some form of palliative care, the government of Ontario, in particular the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Community and Social Services, should develop a comprehensive community-based system of palliative care services that would provide for (1) responsible and effective use of government resources, (2) a wider range of services that allows for choice on the part of the terminally ill and his or her family and (3) a system that is accessible to all regions of our province.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for York Centre has moved notice of motion 2. The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mr. Cousens: I thank the honourable members of the House for having this private members' hour in which a member can bring forward a bill that he or she feels is especially important.

During the past year, I have served as chairman of the Grossman task force on human and social services. During that time I circulated a paper across the province, visited some 15 different communities in my capacity as chairman and received in excess of 500 responses to our paper.

I also speak as a clergyman, one who has been an ordained Presbyterian minister for quite a number of years, who has been at the bedside of the dying and who understands something of the nature of that very important process.

I also speak as one who, in his own family, has gone through some of the tough times of dealing with a dying person.

Therefore, in bringing forward this motion this morning, I hope members of this House will appreciate it as a very important human issue and that we will be able to address the subject with some compassion and care.

Maybe some people do not know what palliative care is all about. Palliative care is an active and compassionate caring for the terminally ill. So much can and should be done for the dying person.

Palliative care is a system of care based on a philosophy of life, rather than a process or system for dying; as Dr. Cicely Saunders calls it, ELC—efficient loving care. Palliative care is for people with a limited time to live; sometimes it will be two years, one year, six months or less.

Palliative care deals with children and seniors alike; it deals with symptoms and pain; it deals with the whole person; it deals with the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of patients and families. It is this theme that we are addressing today.

I have a copy here of the paper we circulated across the province. It is Palliative Care: Developing a Comprehensive System in Ontario, and I will circulate copies to all members of the House in case they have not seen it.

In the response to that paper, a number of conclusions were raised by those who read it and understood something of the issue. They have said, first of all, that there is a definite need for increased funding to community-based palliative care units or teams for an enhanced co-ordination of home care, home support and hospices. There has to be more funding to support these kinds of local, community-based service units and more training provided for volunteers who are involved in providing this important service.

Another major point that came through is that people should not consider palliative care to be for the seniors alone, to be just an adjunct to geriatric services. It is often seen by people to be

a service for seniors. Far from it: it is a service for younger people; it is a service for families with young children. Many people in our society are ill equipped to face the fact of dying. It is not just a seniors issue. That was the second point that came through the considerations of people responding to our discussion paper.

The third point was that palliative care services are not provided in all regions of this province. Where they do exist, these services are often unable to accommodate the local demand.

The fourth point that came through was that there is a need for a continuum of services for palliative care, not only in the hospitals but also in the home or in the community so that a range of services can be provided in hospice care, respite programs, day programs and outpatient services.

Many people who responded to our discussion paper feel that the best model for delivery of palliative care is the community palliative care unit, which can provide a more homelike atmosphere for the patient and family members.

Another conclusion that came through was that more information needs to be available in the community describing palliative care, what it can do and what services are available in that particular community.

Finally, there is now a great need in the province for guidelines, standards and an overall policy for the delivery of palliative care services.

1110

I was impressed by the response of so many people to our paper. It made me, along with members of our party, realize that there has to be a greater response by all of our society in meeting the needs of those who are facing death, along with their families and all those professional service agencies that are doing the job now.

I also challenge all of us to consider the AIDS crisis that is evolving in our society as a civilization. It will probably take 10 years before the virus is checked and stopped. In the meantime, the statistics show that literally hundreds of thousands, possibly millions, of people will be affected by AIDS before the end of this century. In addressing that concern, we have to realize that we do not even yet know totally all there is to know about it.

In a conversation the other day, a doctor was telling me: "Is it possible for a mosquito to become a carrier of AIDS? If that is the case, what does that do to the future predictions of the number of people who could be affected? When a mosquito goes from one person with the disease and then punctures another, can that carry it?" There is still far more to be done, especially in

addressing the needs of those people who are suffering with this disease.

The present total case load in Canada since 1982 is 1,000, and indeed 502 people have died since 1982. It is estimated that up to 50,000 Canadians may be infected by this virus. In Ontario, where 122 cases were diagnosed in 1986 alone, 32 people have died. Since 1982, 311 cases have been found in Ontario, and 158 have died.

We have to face up to the fact that we have a number of problems in our society, and as we deal with this issue of dying, how many hospital beds could be filled with victims of AIDS? That becomes a concern to all of us. Is there not another solution, one that can be community-based rather than hospital-based?

At present, palliative care is in the early stages of showing signs of success in meeting the needs of those people in those communities where there has been a team established to address those needs, but there is an extremely unco-ordinated program across the province. What we are seeing is those communities that are fortunate enough to have community-based groups dealing with the problem.

Hospitals have a concept of dealing with the sick and trying to get them better. It is sometimes very difficult for those who work in a hospital to deal with the fact that certain people are diagnosed as going to die. That is somehow inconsistent with the principle of a health care system based on preventing death and sustaining life. As we begin to bring the service of palliation to others, there needs to be an educational program so that people will begin to know what can be done by facing positively and realistically the reality of what is impending for an individual.

I have been impressed by what I have seen throughout Ontario in such cities as Peterborough and Brockville and King City in York region. These are just a few of a large number of communities that are beginning to establish their own palliative care units. They are doing it by themselves. They are doing it in co-operation with the health care providers and the professionals within the community. Those are the ones that work best, but others within our province should begin to see the benefits that come from that.

If we as a province want to provide services where they can really do something, services that are indeed going to relieve some of the costs of acute care beds but allow them to go back into the home or the community; and where the community is saying, "We do not expect the government to do everything; we as citizens are anxious to

contribute to our families, our neighbours and others to make their lives meaningful and whole," that in itself can be part of society helping itself.

In my final recommendations, which came through our palliative care document and through the responses we have had, there are a number of recommendations that are highlighted. The first thing is that we would like to see the health care system provide a wider range of palliative care options to meet different lifestyle needs. Some will be in the hospital, some will be in the home and some may be in a special place, but let us at least face up to the reality of death and the reality of the needs of those people who are dying or about to die.

Let us also reorient and co-ordinate existing health care services so they can support the growth of palliative care services in every community. I would like to see every community that wants to be served in this way have that option open to it, and if it is possible to provide financial assistance to those communities, then through government assistance and government support, through mechanisms that are available to this government, there can be the establishment of that kind of co-ordinated health care service to assist palliative care in every community across this province, not just those few that have it now but in the thousands of other communities.

Third, we must finance additional community-based palliative care services to allow more people the choice of dying at home. That becomes an option that some people really want but are not able to have right now, and it has to do with the relationship that they and their doctor would have at hospital if they have to be readmitted quickly in order to receive service without being delayed. There could be some way in which a bed is reserved for them so they can float between their home and the hospital and thus receive the service they need. There have to be policies and guidelines for the health care professional service that help make that happen.

We believe as well that there should be provincial standards of practice and evaluation for palliative care. I would be pleased to see the government establish a study group that could begin to work more closely with the Palliative Care Foundation to establish those standards and to set up an evaluation system, a system that brings added respectability to a movement that is already trying hard to do an important job. To have government support, government sanction, government assistance, government support in

the development of those standards and that relationship that comes from them becomes an important ingredient to the success of a fully rounded and developed palliative care system.

Indeed, we must establish palliative care education and training programs for health care professionals and the public. I say health care professionals because most of them have an understanding for the dying, but most of them realize there is much more to be learned about it. Through the establishment of more educational programs at all levels, through the universities, nursing schools and any other source that is working with our total health care system, this kind of education at the beginning can make a big difference.

We also need to conduct more research into the needs of people in pain and the needs of terminal care patients in a home environment. Pain management has become one of those success stories that few people understand, but as you talk with health professionals and doctors, you discover that they now know there are ways in which pain can be addressed and that, through proper management of it, there is no reason for those who are in the final stages of cancer or some other form of disease to suffer unduly. May that kind of pain management also be available to people in their homes.

I suggest this whole subject is one that surrounds all of our society and all of us with a compassion for people and those who have these problems. As a society, we have shown great concern about the needs of so many different kinds of problems and peoples. I think one of the subjects we tend to shy away from is the needs of the dying.

May I suggest that the presentation of this motion this morning may be an opportunity for this Legislature, in its beginning of a new session, in its beginning of fresh thinking on many subjects, to bring some support through the passage of this motion that can lead to a further development of true and genuine caring. I am impressed by the work that has gone on in different churches and in different religions where there is this coming forward. I think it is also time for government and politicians to share in that important empathy, in that caring for the dying.

In presenting this, I trust that members of this House will consider it seriously and that, with proper consideration, action can develop following the passage of this motion this morning. I will retain the final four minutes for windup. Thank you.

1120

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you, three minutes and 50 seconds is reserved for his windup. The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr. Laughren: Hear, hear.

Mr. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the support, even from the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren).

I am pleased to participate in the debate on this resolution and to indicate to the member who has proposed it, the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) that I will be supporting his resolution. In supporting it, I must admit some slight amusement, although I am very appreciative of this new-found interest in health care in the province on behalf of the Tory party. It was not all that long ago that we had a Premier who attempted to close hospitals in the province and, of course, we all recall that for an entire decade it was almost impossible to get the funding required to start up community-based delivery of health care services. The new-found interest is certainly appreciated here and I am just pleased to see that developing.

The member has brought forward a number of extremely important items, each of which demands some serious attention. For anyone who has taken a close look at our health care system, the services, the health care needs which we have and how best to deliver those services, it becomes quite evident that currently, for the most part, we are engaged in the most expensive and sometimes not the most efficient way of delivering services to the people who need them.

We know from studies—and I certainly encountered a lot of very valuable information when I did a lot of research for background on my Bill 3, the Seniors' Independence Act—that an institutional form of care is the most expensive form of care you can come up with and that the least expensive form of care is that which is delivered in the home. So as we develop a community base for delivering health care services, it not only saves money and is more efficient but it also happens to be a better way to assist people who need help.

In my case, I was directing my attention specifically to senior citizens, but naturally, the model that I adopted there would be applicable to anyone else. If you can provide for the person who has difficulty getting out of his or her home for health reasons or simply because of being extremely elderly, then you are not only doing the person a favour but you are also helping to create a better world for him or her.

There is no question that, in the case of someone who is dying from cancer, regardless of age, the person would feel more comfortable in his or her own familiar surroundings. It is better to be in your house than in a hospital bed. It is better to have the opportunity to meet friends and neighbours on a more casual basis than to have to be in that more formal setting of a hospital.

The community-based delivery, while I think it is a challenge in terms of trying to come up with more volunteers than we now have, is an interesting challenge. On the positive side, it also means there will be an opportunity for more people to be involved in volunteering their services to friends and neighbours, people in their own communities. In the long run, that helps us to build a better society.

In the past we have relied on institutions, there is no question about that, partly because it is the simplest thing to do. It is the easiest thing in the world to build a building, to put in the equipment you require and to operate it. That is an easy thing to do. What is far more difficult is to come up with a very efficient, well-organized system that delivers services to people in their homes. We have always relied on institutions. It is kind of the path of least resistance.

While our hospitals are extremely valuable and serve an important role in each of our communities, they should not be the exclusive places where we receive health care services. In fact, in today's world we are learning that we can share, provide a balance.

I will put in a little pitch here for what I am increasingly finding a very frustrating experience, that of trying to establish at Scarborough General Hospital a renal dialysis unit which would operate both in the hospital and in the home; the person receives training at the hospital on how to use the equipment and is able to use that equipment at home.

Unfortunately, the Liberal government really is not functioning any differently than the Conservatives before it, in that it is not only dragging its feet on the decisions but is also using the district health council in the way in which the Tories had originally used it and set it up, and that is to be a political buffer zone. In this case, that is what it is. It has been four years since the justification was provided for the renal dialysis unit, and the district health council has served its political purpose of being a buffer zone so that the minister does not have to take a leadership role.

I personally find that very frustrating because, in the spirit of the resolution which the member

has before us, that renal dialysis program would fulfil that kind of balance between the hospital and the community. However, as I fought the previous Tory government, I will continue to fight this government, this new lot, Tories with red ties, so that we get the necessary services in our community.

The reliance on institutions is really highlighted by the deplorable state of the nursing homes in Ontario. I cannot think of a worse way to provide the kinds of service or facilities that seniors require than the nursing home system which we have in this province. It is, in a word, deplorable. As members know, I spent several years trying to work at that problem. There are some good nursing homes in the province, but they are few in number. Quite frankly, I do not think there is a member in this House who would want to have a relative in a number of the private nursing homes in this province.

It seems to me that because we have a mentality about relying on institutions, we have carried it so far as to have it reflected in how we treat the people who work there. In other words, to be more specific, we see a distinction somehow between public health nurses and hospital nurses. They are paid differently, public health nurses receiving far less than the hospital nurses, and yet the public health nurses are the ones who are working in the community and doing the kind of thing the member for York Centre is properly promoting; that is, developing a greater community base for the delivery of our health care needs.

Finally, as he has mentioned, I too would agree that acquired immune deficiency syndrome is one of the most serious diseases we have encountered. As a society we are struggling with it. We are not sure how to handle it, we do not know the solution and at this point we are not offering a lot of hope to the victims. We are not offering the kind of sensitive approach that is needed, and I think the member for York Centre is absolutely right in the kind of approach that is required.

1130

Unfortunately, governments, including the present one, have not taken the issue very seriously. Whether they have been afraid to speak up on it because initially it was thought to be a homosexual issue—now, as we are learning, it is not exclusively a problem for the homosexual community; it goes beyond that to the heterosexual community—whether or not governments were afraid to speak up because of that connotation, I do not know. But the result is that

very little has been done: not enough money, not enough attention, not enough seriousness about the issue. The member is right when he says a better approach has to be taken, especially in the community.

With those few remarks, I am pleased to support the resolution.

Ms. Hart: I am pleased today to address the concerns the member for York Centre has brought to the attention of this Legislature. In my position as parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), I am aware of the many and various needs of the people of Ontario in the way of health care. I am also sensitive to the increased demands that are being made on our health care system and the necessity for careful consideration of every option in health care delivery.

The considerations behind the resolution of the member for York Centre are indeed valid. It is true that today's society is seeing an increase in the number of diseases such as AIDS and cancer. It is also quite true that this government is committed to providing increased community-based services for our population as we attempt to provide alternatives allowing people to stay in their own homes as long as possible.

I also cannot argue with the point that the cost per day per patient in an institutional facility exceeds the cost of home-based community care. I recognize that the highest proportion of palliative care is administered in the hospitals of this province. While palliative care is not available in all our hospitals, there are many other models of palliative care service in Ontario.

I would like to take this opportunity to outline for members of the Legislature the existing palliative care services that are currently offered by the Ministry of Health in Ontario. All 38 local home care programs now provide some form of care. Current Ministry of Health guidelines for terminally ill patients provide a maximum of four professional visits a day. As well, it is possible for local programs to extend support services for those patients beyond the usual limits to meet exceptional limits and to provide flexibility in service delivery.

Some local home care programs have developed a more individualized approach to palliative care patients through specialized case management services. I point to the Wellington-Dufferin home care program and to the Ottawa-Carleton region home care program as examples of services that provide this specialized approach.

Community services without beds have also been established through the Pine Ridge Hospice

Program, Wellington Hospice Care and the Hospice of Windsor. These services consist of a nurse co-ordinator and volunteers to provide palliative care services.

I would also like to remind members of the government announcement on March 27, 1987, when the Minister of Health announced funding for Casey House, a residential setting for individuals in the final stages of the AIDS illness. Casey House is scheduled to open in September of this year in downtown Toronto and will be affiliated with St. Michael's Hospital.

The Ministry of Health also funds hospital-based models of palliative care service delivery. Palliative care units with dedicated beds and staff in chronic care hospitals providing a palliative care program, including health services and other services such as bereavement counselling, are currently ongoing at the Salvation Army Scarborough Grace General Hospital and Elisabeth Bruyère Health Centre in Ottawa.

Palliative care units with dedicated beds in chronic care hospitals also exist in the Baycrest Hospital and the Riverdale Hospital in Toronto. There are also palliative care units with dedicated beds and staff in acute care hospitals such as the Campbellford Memorial Hospital. These palliative care programs in acute care hospitals typically consist of interdisciplinary palliative care teams to provide services, such as consultation, counselling, co-ordinating, pain-and-symptom management, education and bereavement follow-up for patients wherever located in hospitals. Examples of programs such as these are currently in operation at the Kingston General Hospital, Henderson General Hospital in Hamilton and the Guelph General Hospital.

Many hospitals also provide palliative care units and programs that are financed from hospital global budgets, donations and fund-raising. These examples illustrate the government's current commitment to providing palliative care services to the people of Ontario in many flexible ways.

The member for York Centre is asking us to consider supporting three statements today. He is asking that the government provide responsible and effective use of our resources. I can find no difficulty with this statement, and I do not think there is a member of this Legislature who would have any difficulty supporting such a premise. But I must remind the members of the Legislature that this government is committed to careful consideration of all options available before committing itself to ongoing programs.

The government is currently considering many options in the provision of palliative care services for the people of Ontario. The Ministry of Health is currently faced with ever-increasing demands for services and programs that it must meet with finite resources. Before embarking on a comprehensive program of any sort, we must look at what is available in terms of financial resources and what will best serve the needs of the people in terms of programs and services. We must ensure that any policies we adopt are appropriate to the needs that exist and flexible enough to meet the changing needs of palliative care patients. Any proposals that we consider must be flexible enough to encourage the development of individualized treatment packages to meet specific needs while also providing the cost-effective use of limited resources.

The programs I have outlined to the members of the Legislature illustrate that in providing palliative care services the Ministry of Health has been mindful of the need for flexibility and choice in the provision of these services. The government will continue to be sensitive to the varied needs of these patients as we consider future options for the provision of palliative care.

The member for York Centre has also asked us to support a system that is accessible to all regions of this province. It has been the commitment of this government to bring in a health care system for the people of the province that is accessible to everyone in all regions. I would like to indicate that we will always consider the needs of all regions as we introduce and develop health care policy and programs.

In conclusion, the government does recognize the needs of the terminally ill in the province, but I would like to reiterate the point that before simply indicating tacit approval to the motion, we must increase services to those in need of palliative care services, examine carefully the options that are available to us with an eye towards careful management of our health care resources and ensure that the people of Ontario gain the most advantage from programs paid for with their tax dollars.

With that caveat, I would like to indicate to the member for York Centre that I will be supporting his motion.

1140

Mrs. Marland: In rising this morning to speak to this very serious resolution, first, I wish to congratulate my colleague the member for York Centre. I think the resolution that he brings before this House this morning is one of the most significant private member's bills that I have had

the privilege and the opportunity of speaking in support of.

I must say at the outset that the previous speaker for the government, the member for York East (Ms. Hart), who just completed her comments, seemed to be leading towards reasons not to support the resolution, and I was certainly relieved when I heard her comment at the completion of her read speech that she is going to support it, because I can hardly imagine that any member of this Legislature would not wish and appreciate the opportunity to support such a resolution.

Fortunately for a great majority of the people of this Legislature, and indeed the people of this province, they may never have to face the subject of palliative care. It is rather ironic that in 1987 we are here having to discuss this kind of resolution. It is ironic because it was not very many decades ago that the subject of terminal illness was one where there was a community-based provision.

Originally, when we were smaller communities, we obviously were also more caring communities, and at that time the social services were rendered by the churches and the community within and without the church. In our sophisticated society, the responsibility for social services, and indeed, unfortunately, the moral responsibility for even caring for our fellow human beings have been taken out of the community to some degree and become part of the bureaucracy. Therefore, we hear the kind of comments that we heard this morning from the member for York East about the need for the government to carefully consider and fully examine all options. While I respect what was being said, I do not think it takes very long to recognize the need for palliative care and why that need exists.

I am actually very proud to be able to tell the Legislature that the two hospitals in the city I have the privilege of sharing the responsibility of representing, namely, the Credit Valley Hospital and the Mississauga Hospital, both have palliative care services. However, they manage to have those services because they choose to do the funding from their global budgets. They do not have special support from the provincial government, and because the service is becoming more well known, they are receiving more and more referrals, so the funding is becoming a very real problem. I do commend the boards and the staff of both Credit Valley and Mississauga hospitals for their recognition of the need of palliative care.

In Mississauga, we also have a new organization called Hospice of Peel. Hospice of Peel is experiencing a great amount of frustration with government in trying to deal with the needs of the people who require palliative care. I wish to read a letter which I have received from Hospice of Peel, because I feel it summarizes totally why anyone in Ontario would welcome the opportunity to see their representatives support the resolution in the private member's bill that is before us this morning.

Having heard the comments by one of the earlier speakers that palliative care is certainly not something only for the aged, for our senior citizens, I may also add that as the member of the shadow cabinet, the critic for senior citizens' affairs, I recognize that it can well be focused in that age group of our population; but as a parent who experienced the death of a child, I also know that at any age the services of palliative care are always much appreciated.

This letter is over the signature of the director of fund-raising for Hospice of Peel. She writes:

"Hospice of Peel is a newly established community service dedicated to meeting the needs of terminally ill patients and their families. The primary objective is to assist patients to remain at home for as long as possible and to die there, if that is their choice. Our care focuses on 'quality of life' and 'preservation of human dignity.'

"The service we provide fills a need that is not covered by the health care system. It complements existing systems and assists in giving emotional, social and counselling and volunteer time and support for patients and family. Hospice works very closely with home care, Victorian Order of Nurses and the St. Elizabeth Visiting Nurses, and representatives of those organizations serve on our advisory committee.

"All persons living in the region of Peel, with a life-threatening or terminal illness, regardless of age, diagnosis or religious denomination, are eligible for hospice care. There is no fee for service..."

"Hospice services are recognized in England, the United States and in other parts of Canada. I have visited the Victoria Hospice in Victoria, BC, and have been told they receive a great deal of financial support from the provincial government"—of British Columbia. "At a time when the senior population is increasing yearly, when hospital facilities are taxed to the limit, when terminal patients are expressing a desire to remain at home, I see a real necessity for the government of Ontario to become involved.

"The problem Hospice is experiencing at the present time is as follows. If you approach the Ministry of Community and Social Services, you are told that this is not in their jurisdiction and to apply to the Ministry of Health. If you approach the Ministry of Health, they suggest you talk to the Ministry of Community and Social Services. When you apply to the region of Peel, we are told that the region will not support the core program until there is full endorsement from the province of Ontario."

It is a sad commentary that a volunteer organization such as Hospice of Peel has to be bumped around through the government bureaucracies of Ontario when there is no question as to the need for the service it offers. I hope sincerely that in supporting this resolution this morning, every member of this Legislature will say very loudly and very clearly to the provincial government that it does not take any more time to recognize the need for the care of people who are terminally ill.

As is recommended in the discussion paper of the Progressive Conservative caucus entitled *Palliative Care: Developing A Comprehensive System in Ontario*, we must give a choice to the terminally ill person and his or her family. It is that choice of where and how they receive their care that is the responsibility of all of us to address this morning. We have that opportunity.

1150

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I rise in support of the resolution that is before us today, moved by the member for York Centre. It would be very difficult for members of this House not to support this particular motion.

I would have preferred that the member had a different ordering to his parts of it. Given the deficit in services in palliative care that is out there, I am not sure fiscal responsibility would have been the thing I would have put first. It would have been the second item, which is a wider range of services that allow for choice. Then I would have talked about fiscal responsibility and accessibility after that.

It should seem strange to us all that here we are in 1987 dealing with a question as basic as how we care for the dying in our society and the fact there is a major deficit in the kinds of services that are available to people who are dying. As former speakers have said, it is a matter of the change in our society. Several decades ago, it would have been unthinkable for the majority of people to die in institutions, which is definitely the case now, and a small minority of people tend to die at home.

In the past, there was the matter that you were able to be supported in your home by your family and your community. It was expected that your death would take place there. We have gone through a very strange distancing of the whole process of death and in institutionalizing a separation of death from the natural course of things in our lives, in our society, in such a way that people have very little involvement in the actual preparation for death and that kind of thing, let alone the assistance to people in their last days of life.

I think we would all expect that it should be considered a basic right for all people to be able to die with dignity and to die with support from their families and their communities and with spiritual support appropriate to their values. That is not always the case, depending upon where you live in Ontario and the kind of institution you may be in and the kind of support services that are available to that institution.

It seems to me that the options we have developed are based primarily around hospitals. As the member for York Centre says, there is a minority of hospitals, only about 40 in the province, that actually have these programs; and some of them have done it, as the last speaker said, on a voluntary basis, without any real support from the government in terms of funding for it. I really question whether hospitals are the place where we should be putting our major emphasis in terms of palliative care.

My own experience of hospitals, which has been too frequent in the last number of years, has led me to believe that they do acute care very well but that the two areas of failure in our hospitals, in terms of humanizing the institutions, are at the beginning of life in maternity wards and at the end of life for people who are dying and chronically ill. The institutions make attempts to humanize; they allow babies to come into the room, but they are very institutionalized rooms; or they allow families in some cases to come in in the last days of a person's life; but they find it very awkward to make the kinds of accommodations which are much more easily made in the community.

I think of just a very small thing, of an older person I know who died not too long ago who wanted to have her pet with her in the last few days she was alive. That was just an impossibility in the hospital she was in; it was not something that could be accommodated, for all sorts of sanitary notions and that kind of thing. If a community-based option had been there for her, I think that kind of accommodation might have

been made. Given that she had very little family, that was a matter that was very important to her.

I suggest the reason we have never dealt with this, particularly in a strong, politically directed way with a coherent policy in the province, is that we are so separated from the notion of death, and it is not a politically savoury kind of thing to spend a lot of time doting on. I think that has been a major problem for us. Perhaps it is with a kind of irony that the AIDS crisis and the development of specialized hospices in that area, and the potential horror that is in front of us in terms of the number of people who may die from AIDS have brought us around to focusing on this issue which should have been dealt with more in the past.

Other societies have done it, and there are things that can be learned from England and other jurisdictions where they have actually spent an awful lot of time dealing with the question of dying and how to make it more comfortable and more dignified for people.

I do think that all of us in this House should perhaps be saying that at this time we as a body need to think much more seriously about how we are going to go about this in this province; how we are going to humanize it. Are we going to keep it in the institutions? Is that where we think it is best done? Are we going to allow people to die in their own homes, in their own communities, surrounded by their friends and their family, such as it is at that time; or are we again going to maintain this strange distancing?

It is a good thing this has been introduced today. It is a shame, in some ways, that it has to be as generalized a resolution as it is, and that we do not have a specific, strong government response in terms of the programmatic direction the government wishes to take in this. But perhaps this initiative will allow us all to focus on it more and we will come to grips with this, as we should, in the next number of months. Of course, we will be supporting the motion, as I said at the outset.

Mr. Cousens: I would like to thank the honourable members in the House for their response to this motion. I truly appreciate the emphasis of the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) on the community-based aspect of getting things into the community, away from hospitals, and the co-operative aspect, on which he was able to give an excellent review.

I am pleased that after the speech of the member for York East, the Liberal Party will be supporting this motion. I think there is a

sensitivity to the issue and I appreciate that. We all have to understand that the politics can go out of some issues and we can deal with the needs of people. There can be priorities that are set that will allow us as politicians to put people's needs at the very highest level, with the fiscal responsibility as part of it. I do not think anyone would want to take that away from any one of us as politicians.

I am genuinely grateful for the remarks of the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland). Her leadership in work for the elderly, not only in her riding but also in this House, is recognized by all of us. Her remarks in drawing out the illustration in Peel and the problems that people are having with the government in serving people with palliative care problems is a very genuine one. I appreciate the way in which she did it and I thank her.

Having been a critic with the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) on the Ministry of Community and Social Services for so long, I guess we are beginning to become far more in tune with some of the same issues. I again thank the member for his excellent remarks and his support. I liked the way he talked about humanizing the system; it is something we all have to think about.

Dealing with the dying is a part of life; it is a part of what we are all about. We all genuinely hope that we ourselves will not have to face that specific need. People shut it out of their minds. We cannot. Fortunately, through this kind of involvement with the subject and with the issues, we in Queen's Park are able to give leadership.

The leadership is coming from people within our community. In my own community in Thornhill, there is a group now starting Hospice Thornhill. You have different religions and different people from different backgrounds sharing and working together to make this happen so that our community can serve people within the community.

There is a failure now, in starting up Hospice Thornhill, very much in the fact that the government is not able to assist or support beyond the professional business that is provided in the local hospitals. I am trying to move, through this motion, back into the community so that there can be a movement from hospital to community and from community to hospital, professionals and laymen working together in a common desire to help those who need our help.

This has been a good opportunity to debate an important subject. I am grateful that I am able to bring it forward and receive the kind of support I

believe will be forthcoming as this is voted on. I am genuinely grateful that we can begin to do something more about it. I hope, as well, that the member for York East will take back some of the suggestions from this House to the minister and to other cabinet ministers so that they can begin

to respond, I hope, in the spirit in which we are all trying to address the subject.

Motion agreed to.

The House recessed at 11:59 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

SPEAKER'S RULINGS

Mr. Speaker: Before we commence the routine proceedings: yesterday, the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) asked that I review the remarks of the government House leader during the arguments for and against the motion for an emergency debate to determine if the minister had used words which imputed false or unavowed motives to another member.

I have reviewed carefully the transcript of the remarks and am of the opinion that the minister's remarks did not offend the provisions of standing order 19(d). However, I would remind all members that "good temper and moderation are the characteristics of parliamentary language" and that members should take care not to use language that may offend other members or otherwise create disorder.

Also following yesterday's emergency debate, I had an opportunity to review standing order 37. I would like to point out to all members that standing order 37(b)(i) provides that "the member proposing the motion" to set aside the ordinary business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance "shall give written notice of the motion to the Speaker at least two hours before the afternoon sitting of the House." If the motion is otherwise in order, standing order 37(c) provides that "the member proposing the motion may state his arguments in favour of his motion in not more than five minutes."

I believe the standing orders are clear in requiring the member who, by giving notice to me, proposes the motion to be the same member who states the initial arguments in favour of the motion.

Yesterday, the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) gave notice of his intention to move a motion to set aside the ordinary business to discuss a matter of urgent public importance. However, the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) moved the motion and stated the arguments in favour of the debate proceeding. After reviewing the standing orders, it is clear to me that the procedure followed yesterday was incorrect.

In the future, I would ask that members adhere to the very clear provisions of the standing orders; that is, the member who gives notice of a motion for an emergency debate must also be the

person who moves the motion and presents the initial arguments in favour of the motion. If the member who gives notice of the motion for an emergency debate is not able to be present to move the motion, it will be necessary to have the consent of the House for another member to move the motion. In this regard, there is a history of co-operation on the part of all members in the House to waive the rules in special circumstances.

Mr. McClellan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would simply like to apologize to the House for my procedural error yesterday and to indicate that the next time I propose an emergency debate I will follow the correct procedure; that is to say, in about an hour.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Cousens: I rise with anger in my voice, fire in my veins, ready for war. The fact is that in the speech from the throne this government has failed to respond to the needs of the people of York region and north Metro for the new Highway 407. It has been universally agreed for over four years that it was needed. It was announced in the last speech from the throne by the government of the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller).

Unless we get this road, we will not have development continue north of Toronto. We cannot continue to provide for the needs of the commuters and the people coming into that community without a response by this government. All we have in the speech from the throne is that there will be major new transportation links created to serve high-growth areas. We are the high-growth area. We want that link and we want it announced immediately.

Our mayors are becoming distraught. Industry is starting to halt. Business is starting to slow down. Unless we make that investment, we will not continue to see the growth in York region the way our government wants to do it. The taxpayers are paying their money. They are getting nothing back for it. There is only one good east-west link and that is Highway 7, and it is becoming a slow-moving parking lot.

I challenge this government to get off its seat and do something for the people of York region.

LABOUR DISPUTES

Mr. D. S. Cooke: For the second time in the last couple of months, the separate schools are

closed down in the city of Windsor due to a labour dispute. The first strike lasted three weeks, with the teachers out on strike because they could not achieve a satisfactory or fair settlement with their board.

If one looks at the history of this, one can understand that the final settlement the board offered could have been offered in the first instance and that there was never a need for a strike. That strike was clearly created by the separate school board in the city of Windsor. In fact, what happened was that, through months and months of negotiations, there was not one financial offer to the Catholic teachers at that board until the very last minute, when by law under Bill 100, they had to have their vote on the last offer. That was when the board finally came forward with an offer.

Now we are in the position where our caretakers and the other support staff are out on strike, again because the Catholic school board is not prepared to offer a fair settlement. There are all sorts of inequities because some of the school board used to be under the private board and now the rest of the employees are under the auspices of the overall public board.

I call on both sides to get back to the bargaining table. There has to be a solution to this; there has to be an agreement that is signed by both sides. It does not matter whether one side or the other wants to delay; there has to be a settlement and that can only be achieved at the bargaining table.

WILLIAM GRENVILLE DAVIS

Mr. Callahan: Recognizing that, normally, statements from the opposite side are negative at most times, I would like to rise on a very positive comment to express publicly my respect for my predecessor in the Legislature, the former Premier of this province, Mr. Davis, who is being awarded the Order of Ontario. I am glad to see a few members on the opposite side applauding, because normally they treat him with a bit of disdain.

I want to thank the former member for the numbers of years that he served his province, served it well, served the people and citizens of Brampton, and I hope I will be able to follow in that noble tradition.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Stevenson: Yesterday the Liberal publicity machine went into passing gear in making announcements on capital funding for schools.

Today, as the red smoke clears, the complete inadequacy of this funding becomes evident.

The \$226 million will be favourably received, but it leaves a shortfall between funding and the need for new schools that has the greatest gap in the history of Ontario. The school boards of York and Durham regions have requested \$152 million for this year alone, which accounts for 68 per cent of yesterday's allocations. What about the needs of the rest of the province?

The total request for school boards for capital funding and maintenance for this year is \$1.07 billion, leaving a province-wide shortfall two and a half times that of the 1984-85 period. In Durham-York there are 29,300 students in portables. The boards have requested 23 new schools now and require 16 new schools per year over the next five years. The funding allocation yesterday will not begin to address the needs of these schools.

The Premier (Mr. Peterson) is spraying money around the province as if it were Agent Orange. He is not hitting the important targets and he is killing the taxpayer in doing so. The education of our youth is too important to allow these unprecedented shortfalls to continue at a time of unprecedented government revenue.

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SUNDAY RACING

Ms. Bryden: This is a sad day for democracy in Ontario. The Supreme Court of Ontario has ruled today that the Ontario Racing Commission's mandate to regulate race tracks in Ontario does not require it to listen to the public or to take its concerns into consideration. What is more, it has awarded costs against the five residents who took the issue of the residents' rights to the court, so these residents will be paying out of their own pockets for lawyers hired by a government-appointed board to defend its own rulings.

The ruling puts the ball squarely back in the court of the Ontario Legislature. It is now up to the government to bring redress to the 50,000 east-end residents who are severely disadvantaged by the racing commission's approval of Sunday racing on 52 Sundays of the year at Greenwood Race Track. The Ontario government can do this by adopting my private member's bill, introduced last December, to ban Sunday racing; it can introduce its own bill or it can give the city of Toronto the power it has requested to regulate racing hours and days at Greenwood.

Will the government announce immediately what it is going to do to solve this problem?

CABINET MEETING

Mr. McGuigan: Wednesday, April 22, was a very happy day for southwestern Ontario, when the member for Chatham-Kent (Mr. Bossy) and myself had the pleasure of welcoming the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and his cabinet to Kent county for their regular cabinet meeting. By reaching out in this manner, the cabinet dispels the feeling that we sometimes get in southwestern Ontario that we are a long way from the action here in Toronto.

Many individuals, organizations, municipal leaders, businessmen and businesswomen took advantage of the opportunity to come in, visit and talk with the ministers.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the Premier and the cabinet. I wish to express appreciation on behalf of myself, the member for Chatham-Kent and the warden of Kent county, Rex Crawford, for the openness and accessibility they displayed on this occasion.

TEACHERS' LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr. Bernier: This statement is further to my question of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) yesterday with respect to the ongoing strike of the secondary school teachers in Dryden, which is now in its 25th day.

I have received additional phone calls, not only from the concerned parents and the students themselves but also from the native leaders, who have pointed out to me that one third of the enrolment of the Queen Elizabeth District High School in Sioux Lookout, who are native students, have now been deregistered and have returned to their remote native communities.

I want to point out to the House that there is a great deal of anxiety, anger and frustration at the minister's refusal to intercede in any way whatsoever. There is the fear that students will lose their year and there are indications that many may even drop out of the school system.

We are pleading again to the Minister of Education to get involved, to pick up the phone in the interests of the 1,600 students of that district and ask the board and the teachers to get back to the bargaining table to settle and resolve this dispute.

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Mr. Breagh: I rise today to ask the government to intervene in the problems at Durham College in Oshawa, particularly in the dental hygiene program. There was widespread support across all of eastern Ontario for that program. It has been particularly successful. It

would be a shame to see that closed because of financial problems.

I would like the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) to take advantage of this situation to expand that particular program to fill a need, as suggested by a dentist from Trenton who said, "Rather than close the dental hygiene program at Durham College, it would be my suggestion to expand upon the number of graduates at Durham to serve eastern Ontario."

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

EDUCATION REVIEWS

Hon. Mr. Conway: Mr. Speaker, as you and colleagues in the assembly know, one of the key commitments of this government's legislative program, as announced in this week's speech from the throne, is its commitment to excellence in education. Critical to that commitment is the assurance that we have a system that ensures accountability to the public and promotes children's learning skills to their fullest potential.

Therefore, I would like to announce the Ministry of Education's plans to assess student performance at both the elementary and secondary levels. Beginning with a pilot project this May, the Ontario Ministry of Education will conduct two assessments per year of student achievement in the areas of mathematics, English-français and science.

These assessments, called provincial reviews, will collect information from students, teachers and other educators on the nature of the instructional program as well as on the achievement of students. The results will be used to improve the programs delivered to students and to report to the public on student achievement on a province-wide basis.

In 1988 we will review chemistry and physics at the grades 11 and 12 level. We anticipate that in 1989 we will review mathematics at the grades 4 to 6 level and English-français at the grades 7 to 10 level. The following year we plan to review language arts at the grades 4 to 6 level and science in the grades 7 to 10 level. By 1992 it is intended that additional provincial reviews will be carried out in mathematics at the grades 11 and 12 level, English-français at the grades 11 and 12 level, science at the grades 4 to 6 level and mathematics at the grades 7 to 10 level.

This cycle will be repeated every five years to enable us to establish trends over time and to determine whether standards are being maintained. It is projected that the annual cost to do two reviews in both English and French will be \$500,000.

It should be stressed that this is not a return to standardized province-wide testing of every pupil. Rather, we will be collecting student performance statistics using a representative sample of students drawn from across Ontario. This information will be analysed and reported on at the province-wide level.

In addition to the provincial sample, we will offer individual school boards the opportunity to take advantage of the materials and procedures developed for provincial review and to use this process to meet their own priorities for program review and accountability at the local school board level. This initiative will provide provincial information on the strengths and weaknesses of programs which can then be compared by participating school boards and schools with their own results. Changes can then be made in curriculum, instruction and resources where weaknesses are identified.

While we will monitor the standards of achievements in our schools, we must also look to the international scene to ensure that our students in Ontario receive an education that ranks among the best in the world. To this end Ontario has recently participated in two international studies, in mathematics in grades 8 and 13, and science in grades 5, 9 and 13. In 1988, with seven other jurisdictions including the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan, we will take part in an international study of achievement in mathematics and science among 13-year-old students.

With this initiative we feel we are supporting positive development within our Ontario schools and will be ensuring that we have a valid system by which we can assess how our student population is learning and performing.

GUARANTEED LINES OF CREDIT PROGRAM

Hon. Ms. Munro: Since its inception last year, the Ontario Film Development Corp. has played an integral role in the cultivation of Ontario's film industry. Currently, film and television production in Ontario is enjoying unprecedented growth and success. To date, the OFDC has participated in 170 projects and has committed \$5.2 million in production and development financing.

I would like to compliment the OFDC and its chairman and chief executive officer, Wayne Clarkson, who is with us in the House today. Congratulations on their outstanding contributions to the vitality and accomplishments of the film industry in Ontario.

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To help ensure that the domestic film industry continues to enjoy this level of productivity, it gives me great pleasure to rise in the House today to announce the introduction of a new program by the Ontario Film Development Corp. It will greatly assist film and television producers in obtaining financing from commercial lending institutions.

The guaranteed lines of credit program will help alleviate the unique problems faced by the film and television industry in securing financing from commercial lending institutions. With the support of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), on the recommendation of the OFDC and its board of directors guaranteed lines of credit will be established to Canadian film and television production companies.

This program will serve three functions: first, to increase the ability of the film and television industries to meet daily operating expenses; second, to improve the industry's business management practices; and third, to increase the banking community's understanding and acceptance of the industry.

Eligible film and television production companies must be Canadian-owned and controlled, with 75 per cent of their shareholders and employees resident in Ontario. The companies must have a minimum of two years' activity in the film industry and an existing line of credit of at least \$50,000 and no more than \$750,000. The additional guaranteed line of credit available will be to a maximum of \$250,000.

The guaranteed lines of credit program will augment the portfolio of other OFDC financial assistance programs as well as other incentives which my ministry helped to establish, such as the inclusion of film production and distribution companies in the small business development corporations administered by the Ministry of Revenue.

The new guaranteed lines of credit program will help ensure the continued success of the film industry in Ontario and represents another initiative by this government in adding to the cultural vitality of this province.

RESPONSES

EDUCATION REVIEWS

Mr. Grossman: We were looking forward to the remarks and what we thought might be, and so far are, daily statements by the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) to try to back up the rather hollow and general rhetoric contained in the throne speech, and more important, as a

result of all his hard work, the advance information that got the headlines that so far have not been backed up, even in the throne speech and certainly not in the statements we have heard so far.

Yesterday, we were treated to a grand announcement which, one will discover tomorrow, would hardly look after all the needs of Durham and York regions and the separate school boards across this province, without beginning to mention any of the other schools or any of the other needs across this province.

In addition, yesterday we were treated to the advice that the government, in this year of an extra \$919 million, could not even mount the capital projects this year but had to wait for yet another 12 months to begin the capital construction program. They did not even have the courage to stand—or perhaps the Minister of Education did not have the clout to convince his colleagues that the capital crunch in education is so important that it ought to have been a 1987 priority and not, let us be clear, an April 1988 priority. That means some of this construction will not begin until 1989.

Then today we get this response to the bold speeches of the minister and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) about the need for standardized testing and the need to reinforce basic education in our schools. Now that he has finished delivering it, let us actually read the words. It says, "In 1988, we will review chemistry and physics at the grades 11 and 12 level." In 1992, they will get to mathematics at the grades 11 and 12 level and science at the grades 4 to 6 level.

Remember the speech of the Premier at the Empire Club telling us how important science and mathematics were? They are so important that they are going to get around to science and mathematics in grades 11 and 12 and 4 and 6 by 1992. Lest one thinks this is going to be a major breakthrough even in itself by 1992, the minister was constrained to point out that this is "not a return to standardized province-wide testing." No, no. "Rather, we will be collecting student performance statistics using a representative sample of students drawn from across the province."

Mr. Pope: It has already been done.

Mr. Grossman: That is exactly right. My colleague is exactly right. What the minister says here is that this process is an information collecting thing. Let me read his words again, at the top of page 2. "These assessments, called provincial reviews, will collect information from students, teachers and other educators on the

nature of the instructional program as well as on the achievement of students."

With this bold statement, the minister really went out on a limb this afternoon, standing in the forefront of science, technology and mathematics training, to announce that by 1992 in grades 11 and 12 the ministry will have received information from students and teachers on the nature of the instructional program and the achievement of students. That is terrific.

Some of us would have thought, having read the Premier's statements and the minister's statements to the media, that maybe in 1987 the ministry was already collecting information from students and teachers; that maybe after 23 boring months in office, he would have had a moment to have his staff collect this information from students, teachers and educators and would be prepared in the speech from the throne, or maybe even today, to announce not that he was going to look at information collecting in 1992, but that he was ready to proceed today to implement the changes in mathematics, science and technology that are so badly needed in our education system that the minister has neglected for 23 months.

Mr. Allen: If I might, I would like to respond to the remarks of the Minister of Education with regard to his proposals for assessing the education system of this province.

Unlike the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), I did not await the speech from the throne with any great expectations that there would be some brand-new vision of education in this province. Therefore, I am perhaps not nearly as disappointed as he is that I find so little in the speech from the throne that is new, exciting and adventuresome.

It does, of course, follow on some of the agenda that was laid down in the last years of the previous government and it picks up some proposals that were made by this party at various times in estimates and what have you. We had our say yesterday about what we thought about the space question in the system and the allocation of moneys therefor.

I presume that what the minister is announcing today is something in addition to the school leaving exams he has proposed, which would utilize local teachers and staff to set a portion of a compulsory exam that would be required across the system to measure that part of the school system. But what I do find incredible about this statement is partly the remark that the Leader of the Opposition did make: the timetable. It is really astonishingly slow as a method of moving in on a system when I know that ministry has

been looking at assessment procedures and techniques for many years. For example, I do not understand why the minister is assessing so few subjects over such a long period.

Second, I do not understand, although I hear his commitment to the traditional literacy and the new literacy, why he is exempting such important subjects as history and geography, the technical subjects, as well as the business side of the curriculum which I thought he himself had tried to strengthen in some respects. Why are those not being assessed and considered to be important in the same sense?

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For example, why is he not using the Ontario assessment instrument pool, not as a voluntary thing to let boards buy into assessment on their own sampling basis but making it compulsory and requiring that as a regular thing of boards, so they may review the findings and see where they stand, board by board across this province, in terms of the delivery of excellence and so the schools may see, school by school, how they are performing?

There is no need to get down to the individual students and there is no need to get down to individual teacher's judgements in that process. It can be done perfectly well in the sampling system that the minister proposes, but why not make it compulsory? Why not go after it? Why not let our people in this province really know where their boards and where their schools stand in terms of delivering excellence to our kids in this province?

I applaud the small step, but I wish I could stand here and really give a big ovation about the movement on this question of assessment.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the expert on automobile insurance, I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions.

He said yesterday, the day before and on the infamous last Thursday, April 23, that he was capping rates. He also said, and the insurance companies have said, that they are losing money in the auto business. Can the minister explain to us how the auto insurance companies are going to be allowed by him to move from a loss position to a break-even position without having insurance rates increase?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition made a statement and I thought it

was just a flash in the pan. I am delighted to see he has decided to get off the bench and get into the game. For three or four months now we have been talking about auto insurance and he has been sitting there watching. But let me just tell him, in my statement—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I seem to have struck a chord.

An hon. member: A chord or accord?

Mr. Rowe: No, no; your accord is over there.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps we could have a response now.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: In my statement I in no way implied that rates would necessarily go down. The position we have taken on the issue is one of equity and fairness. There is a great number of motorists in Ontario whose rates have been arbitrarily set and who have been upgraded in their ratings for no apparent reason. We will bring some equity to that system.

Again, and I have said this before, we will provide a fair, equitable system that will protect the insured in Ontario, but that does not mean the rates will necessarily go down. They could go down, but we are not guaranteeing it.

Mr. Grossman: Might I first remind the minister that this question was raised by me on November 25, 1985. It was my first question in the House as Leader of the Opposition. Let me remind him that he stole no fewer than four parts of his alleged big move on automobile insurance from the speech I gave 10 days before he stood up last Thursday.

Let me also remind him that—

Mr. Martel: It sounds like the Bobbsey Twins.

An hon. member: It is the only good idea they have had.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: I will not accuse the minister of having sat on the bench on this one because we all know that as recently as two months ago he was sitting on the insurance companies' bench on this one, explaining how much money they were losing and why their rates were so justifiable. That is where he has been on automobile insurance.

The minister said in the Legislature—it is on page 4838—that “in Ontario in automobile insurance alone, when it comes to underwriting profit, the insurance companies still pay out more in claims than they take in as premiums.” That is

his statement. Given that statement, how is it possible that the insurance companies are going to be able to move from a loss situation, which the minister acknowledges, to a break-even position without having automobile insurance rates go up with his cap, so to speak, on them?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: To correct the revisionist impression the Leader of the Opposition gives, his speech of 10 days ago followed my announcement in the *Toronto Star* three weeks prior to that that one of the things we were looking at was these various aspects. In his usual manner, the Leader of the Opposition is trying to be on both sides of the issue.

We are facing a situation where the Leader of the Opposition has stated that he is absolutely, unalterably opposed to government insurance and that he is absolutely in favour of rate review, and here he is standing up and arguing against it. What we have is a situation where in his usual manner he is trying to be on both sides of the issue.

To get to the question the member asked, I am suggesting that if the insurance industry is losing money at the present time, and I am not denying that it may be losing money, it is still in the business. There was nothing to prevent them from raising their premiums to any level they needed to make a profit, other than the marketplace. The marketplace is working and it will continue to work. We will see that there are no inequities. This does not mean we are going to subsidize insurance. It does not mean we are going to compel people to provide insurance if they do not want to. What we are going to do is deal with the inequities. That is the concern; that is the problem.

Mr. Brandt: How?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Ask me the next question and I will tell you how.

Mr. Grossman: I will ask Rosemary later. I want to apologize to the minister for having presumed that his announcement in the *Star* was perhaps just a leak and not an announcement of government policy. We usually tend not to make that mistake, but now we understand that when we read it in the *Star* it is in fact an announcement.

A moment ago the minister said, and I wrote this down, that if the companies were losing money there was nothing to prevent them from raising their rates other than the marketplace. That defines the question very simply. If the companies are losing money, as the minister acknowledges they are, is there anything in his

cap system that prevents them from raising their rates to move to a break-even position?

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Hon. Mr. Kwinter: At the present time, the rates are capped as of April 23.

Mr. Grossman: Not if you find out they are losing money.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: They are going to have to go to the rate review board, which the member is in favour of.

Mr. Grossman: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: If he is in favour of it, he must have some idea of how it would work.

Mr. Grossman: You are the minister.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The rate review board will determine whether or not there is any justification for a rate increase, and it will then make that determination. Having done that, and it has worked in other jurisdictions, that is the maximum. The marketplace will still work. That is the maximum they can go to, but the marketplace will dictate what rate they do go to, as it does now.

Mr. Grossman: Let the consumers not be confused: under the minister's new system, the rates are going to go up.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. The minister will recall the infamous \$100-million high-tech fund, the cornerstone of last year's speech from the throne—and budget, for that matter. Recent questions from us have finally pried from the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) the information that last year the minister and his colleagues managed to spend \$3 million out of that \$100-million allocation. Further, the minister will recall that the \$100 million per year was financed by the Treasurer to the tune of \$50 million new money and \$50 million old money.

How can the minister explain, therefore, the fact that he apparently spent \$47 million less on high technology than was being spent when he took office?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I would say to the Leader of the Opposition that a commitment was made by this government that \$1 billion would be spent over 10 years. That commitment stands, and the \$1 billion will be spent over the 10 years. We have been very careful in putting together the technology fund through the Premier's Council. We went into this thing very carefully, so that we did not waste money the way the member's

government did on such things as Wyda, Graham Software and everything else.

Mr. Grossman: He is the dean of wasting money. It was the minister's government that did Graham Software, Exploracom, Wyda—what others have we got? We could go on, but in the interests of time my simple question to the minister is this: as he will surely understand, the speed at which technology is being applied and developed is breath-taking these days. He came to office when the government, by his Treasurer's own admission, was spending \$50 million a year on high technology, and he pledged to leave in the \$50 million and add another \$50 million.

We want to know why it is that two years into his term he has chosen to reduce his commitment to high technology—indeed, the previous government's commitment—from \$50 million a year, from his own figures, down to \$3 million a year. Why did he do that?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: As I stated, and I will state again for the member, we have committed that we will be spending \$1 billion over 10 years, and that will be the amount spent.

I should mention to him that besides the \$3 million that was spent under the university research incentive fund, currently, under the technology fund, the industrial component, six projects are being seriously considered, for a total of \$35 million. In addition, 30 projects are being developed, with a possible \$80 million in requests, and announcements on these are expected some time before the end of June.

I would also like to tell him we are also dealing with the centres of excellence. There will be at least six of those approved. We had 28 applications, but at least six of those will be approved some time between now and July.

Mr. Grossman: Let me remind the minister that the university research incentive fund was created in the 1984 budget, and what he has done is simply to shift a couple of million dollars from the education budget over to the high-tech budget because he could not even spend those \$2 million on high technology. He just did a simple budget shift.

Let us talk about another branch of his ministry under the same budget.

Mr. Speaker: By way of question.

Mr. Grossman: My question is this: in last year's speech from the throne, there was an undertaking that the government would double its food exports to the Far East. We have discovered that in the one year in which the minister and his colleagues have been responsi-

ble for implementing that, the total increase is 0.1 per cent. On that basis, it would not be \$100 million or \$1 billion over 10 years; on that basis, he will have met that throne speech commitment in 1,000 years. Could he tell us today how much money he plans to spend?

Mr. Fontaine: We will not be here.

Mr. Gillies: Even you will be forgotten then, René.

Mr. Grossman: No, I do not think he will be.

How much does the minister intend to ask of the Treasurer for the Premier's Council this year? Will it be \$200 million, to make up for last year's and this year's \$100 million, or will it be another \$3 million?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: As I have stated, besides the \$3 million we have approximately \$35 million that is being looked at, plus the 30 projects at \$80 million. I can assure the member that in a matter of two years this government has likely done more for technology in this province than his government did in 42 years.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Rae: My question is of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions. He has talked a lot about the marketplace. I would like to ask him a very basic question. What kind of free marketplace can we have when buyers have to buy? Can he explain that? What kind of marketplace is that?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: That is a rather rhetorical question. There are lots of things in life that buyers have to buy. We have to buy food and we have a marketplace. What kind of question is that?

Mr. Rae: I will tell the minister what kind of question it is. If you want to drive a car in Ontario you have to buy insurance; so to talk about a free marketplace with respect to insurance is absolute nonsense and the minister knows it. It is fatuous for him to come into the House and continue to spout the rhetoric about the market when sellers collectively have an extraordinary power over buyers with respect to insurance. That is precisely what has happened.

Given that it is a compulsory marketplace and given that you have no choice but to purchase if you want to drive a car in Ontario, I would like to ask the minister a basic question. Can he tell us whether the rate review board is, in fact, going to guarantee a return on investment and a guaranteed profit? Is that going to be part of the service?

Can he not confirm that means that drivers will, of necessity, be paying more than they would be paying for a not-for-profit plan in which any interest benefits would be returned to the plan and not to shareholders or anybody else; in which there would be no duplication of service; in which there would be a reduction of legal costs? Can he not simply tell us in this House that driver-owned, not-for-profit insurance is, in fact, cheaper and more efficient than the service he is giving to the insurance companies in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The leader of the third party says we have, in effect, what he calls a monopoly. He is advocating a government-run system which would be the only game in town. We have a situation where we have over 200 companies competing in the marketplace, and that is considered a monopoly; then we have a system where we have a government monopoly that is not considered a monopoly.

When he talks about efficiency in the marketplace and profit, I should show him—and I am sure all members with eyesight can see this—that in Manitoba the headline says, “Fired MPIC Head Charges Minister Coverup.” It shows, “Firms Sue MPIC Over Mishandling...Ex-MPIC Boss Cites Coverup Over Big Losses.” The loss potential is \$53 million in Manitoba, and this is supposed to be the efficient, profit-sharing system.

What I am suggesting to him is that we are looking at a system that will bring fairness; it will bring equity. It will be run by the private sector, which has made Ontario the province it is.

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Mr. Rae: First I want to thank the minister for what he is doing for our party. No one has provided greater service than what the minister has been saying in the House today, and I want to thank him for that.

If I am not mistaken—and I watched with great interest the press conference on our television—last week, in answer to a question, he indicated that the government had not ruled out the possibility. I hear a very different answer today and I am delighted that for once the minister has indicated exactly where he is going and where he is coming from.

If you have 200 companies, many of which are duplicating services, legal disputes going on with respect to settlements costing people a lot of money, people having to sue their insurance companies to get over \$140 a week, duplication of service rife and a guaranteed profit which the minister and his rate review board are building

in, is that what the minister calls an efficient system for the people of Ontario compared to a plan owned and operated by the drivers of Ontario on a public, not-for-profit basis in which all the premiums are there for drivers—not for shareholders in the United States or England, not for people who have the big money, but for the ordinary drivers of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: We have a whole range of reforms that we are bringing to the auto insurance scene. We have Justice Coulter Osborne looking at no-fault insurance. We are looking at tort reform, curbing the abuses in the auto repair industry and a rate review board that will look at rates. Even if they do—and that is up to them—set a maximum profit, that does not mean you must go to that.

The other thing we are doing is we are going to set up an insurance advocate to deal with abuses that are there. One of the things the leader of the third party has not in any way seen fit to mention, when he talks about his euphemism of driver-owned plans, when he suggests government insurance—I admit we still have that option and we could look at it; it is not my preference—is that the only reason we would go to government insurance is if we decided we had to subsidize the drivers of Ontario in their auto insurance. That is the only reason for government insurance.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services about day care. The minister will know there has been a long discussion in the select committee on health with respect to the question of commercialization and the problem of the low standards in commercial day care centres, admitted even by members of his own party.

I would like to ask the minister if he can tell us whether it is the intention of the government to provide capital subsidies and direct grants to commercial day care centres now operating in Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is not the intention of the government to provide capital grants to commercial day care operators.

Mr. Rae: Can the minister then tell us the meaning of the phrase in the throne speech which says, “Existing private sector agencies will continue to receive support”? Can he tell us what the nature of that support is?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: At present, municipalities can acquire subsidized spaces from commercial centres, and that will continue.

Mr. Rae: Can he then tell us—if he is not talking about capital grants, but about subsidized spaces with respect to municipalities—about the question of direct operating grants? Will there be any form of direct operating grants given to the for-profit day care centres in the province?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The statement in the throne speech indicated there would be direct operating grants given to nonprofit centres but there would be a delay in that application to commercial centres until the current negotiations between the federal and provincial governments were concluded.

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Solicitor General, who I hope will turn his guns away from the people in northern Ontario and start taking care of business.

We would like to know from the Solicitor General the status of the LSI Applications investigation by the Ontario Provincial Police, the Wyda Systems investigation by the OPP and the Vaughan land sale investigation by the OPP, all of which were commenced last fall and about which we can obtain no information.

Will the minister report right now to the House on the status of these investigations and will he table the reports right now in the House, in the same way the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) released immediately the OPP report on the minister's own problems?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I think the honourable member knows, first of all, that such reports are not available at the present time since they have not all been completed. I think there were three I heard referred to by the member and, in some instances, the reports are still ongoing. The results of the reports will be referred to the appropriate people at the time they are completed.

Mr. Pope: That is a carefully calculated nonanswer. Some of the reports are not completed. Which reports are completed? Why is the minister covering it up and when is he going to table the reports in the House so that people can see what has been going on with the Liberal Party of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: Again, the member knows that when those reports are all completed, they will be forwarded back to the Attorney General and they will then be dealt with appropriately through his office.

CHILD CARE

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I have a question to the Minister of Community and Social Services. We

are now getting a new story from the minister on day care, and I think we had better get it clear today just exactly what the minister is talking about. When is the minister considering direct grants for the commercial sector? At the same time as the nonprofits and only after the federal government changes the Canada assistance plan? Is that what the minister is saying now? Is that his new line?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: No. Again, if I may make reference to the throne speech, there is a clear indication in there that action will begin after the budget with respect to the nonprofits, but it also says clearly that no action will begin with respect to the commercial until the negotiations between the federal and provincial governments are complete. That is expected to be done in June. I cannot make it any clearer than that.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If I might be clear, I do not know whether we should take the credit or whether Dianne Poole should take the credit for changing the minister's position, but why was this not acceptable in December when we asked him to fund the nonprofits with direct grants? The minister said then it was not possible because it would not be fair to the commercial sector. Why is it fair now?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am not saying that direct grants to the commercial centres are not going to occur, but the honourable member knows that the degree to which we can allocate those grants, the amount of those grants, is a factor of the final decision that is made between the federal and provincial governments. That is why that sector of the allocation is being delayed until that decision is made. There is no difference.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. Farmers today rely as much on the decisions of politicians as they do on the weather and the crops they grow for their incomes. The farmers in the United States and Europe know what their support programs are going to be before the crops go in the ground, but the farmers of Ontario do not. Why did the minister not take some leadership in the throne speech and indicate the support he intends to give to Ontario's farmers during this crop year?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The throne speech reaffirmed this government's commitment to the agricultural industry. We indicated in the throne speech that the existing programs would continue: the Ontario family farm interest rate reduc-

tion program, the beginning farmer assistance program, the operating loan assistance program, the Ontario pork industry improvement program, the red meat incentive program, the stabilization programs, and I could go on and on.

These programs will be ongoing, but I have to say also that the federal government has asserted its authority on free trade, and I certainly hope it recognizes its inherent responsibility in supporting Canada's farmers in the face of the international trade conflicts which lower domestic commodity prices. I will certainly be urging my federal counterpart that he continue to meet the needs of the agricultural industry in this country in view of the fact that they are the ones who are asserting themselves on this free trade issue.

1430

Mr. Stevenson: The farm economy is the worst since the 1930s. In the throne speech, the minister's number one priority is to move the ministry to Guelph. Why has he decided to do more for the movers of Ontario than for the farmers in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: Since I became minister two years ago we have increased the agricultural budget by 58 per cent, which is the highest percentage increase of any ministry in this province. That should show the honourable member our commitment to the agricultural industry. The honourable member knows that no matter where he travels in this province, he has farmers coming up to him, as they come up to me and say, "Mr. Riddell, the OFFIR program has been the most meaningful and the best program that any government has ever devised."

Mr. Stevenson: Why did Rita Burak go to the OFA last week and ask for their help to get people to apply for the program?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson) that he has asked his question. Please allow other members to ask questions.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are a lot of members disturbed that the time is being wasted, I am sure.

UNIVERSITY PARK PLACE

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question to the Minister of Health. On Good Friday, in the morning, along with a reporter from the Windsor Star, I visited a facility in Windsor called the University Park Place, which is an unregulated rest home—unregulated because this government

has not acted to protect the thousands of people in rest homes across this province.

This rest home has a fourth floor with 40 residents, the makeup of which is developmentally handicapped, discharged psychiatric patients and many older people with Alzheimer's disease. You require a key to get on the elevator, and each of the exit doors has the regular handle plus an additional handle and lock in the right-hand corner.

Does the minister think it is appropriate for 40 citizens of Ontario to be locked up on the fourth floor of a rest home in the province? If he does not agree that is appropriate, what is he going to do to stop it and will he perhaps look at laying charges against this home for running an illegal nursing home?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I cannot comment on whether charges will be laid. The honourable member is probably quite correct in saying he visited that place with a reporter. In fact, I was met by a reporter who had received a letter, which was bound for me but which I had not received, and actually was able to give me the information before the letter was given to me. I appreciate the timely delivery of information, whichever way it comes to my attention.

I told the reporter, as I will tell the member and the public now, that my staff, through the nursing homes branch, is looking into that matter. I am looking at the allegations contained there. I do not dispute them at this point at all; they are probably quite accurate. I do not like the idea of having people in this province locked up any more than the member does. I can tell the honourable gentleman that when I receive a full report from our people, I will look at what opportunities there are there for us.

The member knows, and he has said already, that rest homes are not regulated. My colleague the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne) is looking at the issue of rest homes, among other things, which he is examining in terms of care for the people of this province. I take the allegations that the member has made very seriously. As I told the reporter who showed me his letter, I am asking and have asked for a full report so I can see what options may be available.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I might point out to the minister that before the letter was made public it was hand-delivered to his office, two days ahead of that. If he cannot get it through his office, that is his own problem.

Is the minister saying he intends to send personnel from the nursing homes branch to that

facility to determine whether they are running it as an illegal nursing home? Second, since this letter has been in his hands for almost two weeks and this complaint was first filed with the Minister of Health in November 1980, is he going to take this matter as an emergency, where 40 people are being locked up, and close that facility now to make sure those 40 people are properly placed in the community? I point out to the minister that only one out of 40 residents is on any waiting list.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I have the people in the ministry looking at the allegations contained in the letter. If I am not mistaken, the date of that letter was April 21. I could be wrong, but I did not have it on April 21, as he contends. I have to say to the honourable gentleman that despite all that, I have asked the people in my ministry to look very seriously into those allegations because I do not think it is appropriate that people be locked in facilities. I am looking at what possibilities there are for us to look at further. I thank the gentleman for bringing this serious situation to my attention, no matter how it came to my attention.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture and Food. On Tuesday, his government told the members of this House that it would act to "sustain a globally competitive agriculture and food industry" in this province. How does he plan to achieve this task in view of his complete failure to convince the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to provide him with the necessary funds to help Ontario's struggling farm community today?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I have already replied to that question. We have not failed in our commitment to the farmers. Since I became minister we have introduced 60 programs, many of which are direct financial assistance programs to farmers. That is the ongoing process of this ministry.

The part that was announced in the throne speech was the relocation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to Guelph to make it, without question, a global agricultural centre of excellence, meaning we are going to have a world-class food lab in Guelph and an expanded pesticides lab. We are going to link the best talents of the private sector, the university and the federal government, which has chosen to relocate its offices to Guelph. In other words, this will be without doubt a centre of excellence for agriculture throughout the world.

Mr. Rowe: That sounds very good. I think the minister is trying to pull another rabbit out of a fortune-cookie box like this one he sent to the media by Priority Post during the four months since the House recessed. It says, "Nice little green box inside a big brown box." Inside this for all the Ontario farmers who are suffering hard times we find a fortune cookie. The fortune cookie reads, "Person who watches mailbox in Year of the Rabbit receives many good things from Foodland Ontario."

Mr. Speaker: Order. Can you pull a question out of your hat?

Mr. Rowe: It may be the Year of the Rabbit in the Orient, but it is obviously the Year of the Donkey at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Clearly the minister has failed to live up to his responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Do you have a question?
1440

Mr. Rowe: I want to know why the minister is wasting taxpayers' money on media gimmicks manufactured in Washington, DC, when he should be using the small amount of money he got from the Treasurer to help farmers in Ontario today, not Washington, DC.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: This was a part of our Foodland Ontario advertising program. We contracted out the business to a Toronto firm. Little did we know the Toronto firm does business, in part, with Washington. That is the reason the word "Washington" appeared on the boxes.

The fortune cookie was made in Ontario. The total cost of the project was \$780 for fortune cookies made in Ontario and a box that the firm contracted out to Washington. But as late as this morning, the secretary manager and the executive members of the Ontario Apple Marketing Commission were in to see me in my office, and they commended us for this program. They know how important the Foodland Ontario advertising program is to them, and this reminded all the news media that we were starting our new Foodland Ontario program. I have to tell the member that he is not on side with the commodity boards in this province.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Essex North is waiting to be heard with his question, if you will allow it.

Mr. Hayes: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. I know he is aware that the federal Tories have decided to lift the moratorium on farm foreclosures at a time when farmers

are really in dire need of government support. This insensitive action not only will affect those with Farm Credit Corp. mortgages but will also encourage other lending institutions to speed up their farm foreclosures. Can the minister tell us—of course, besides all the other 60 programs he is talking about—what he is going to do for the farmers in Ontario? Who will be forced off the land because of this insensitive action by the federal Tories?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: In essence, the question is, "What can Riddell do to protect the farmers from the federal government?" For the member's edification, farmers find they have to cope not only with the weather, low commodity prices and international markets at highly subsidized prices but also with the federal government. That is unfortunate. The timing of this announcement was most unfortunate, particularly at a time when the farmers are going to the fields to plant their crops.

I have sent a telex to Mr. Wise and asked him to reconsider. I have also asked him to consider the recommendations I made when we were talking about a changing role for the Farm Credit Corp. I was disappointed that he did not announce what the changing role in the FCC will be, along with this announcement of lifting the moratorium on the FCC loans.

Mr. Stevenson: What did George McLaughlin say was the biggest single problem in adjusting debt in Ontario? The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and its inaction.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Interjections.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is quiet enough. Let's go. It will never get quieter than this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Maybe.

Mr. Hayes: I am very pleased to hear that the minister has sent a telex, but I hope that is not the total sum of what he is going to do.

The minister is no doubt aware of what Manitoba has done. They have taken the initiative on behalf of the farmers in their province, and they have passed legislation which they call the Family Farm Protection Act. Part of that act would afford protection to farmers against unwarranted loss of their farming operations during periods of difficult economic circumstances, which we are in right now.

Will the minister follow the example of the Manitoba government and implement a family farm protection act in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I am not too sure we always accept what Manitoba does as a good example of what should be done. Maybe the member has learned with automobile insurance and what not what I am talking about. If the member is suggesting that a third party intervene with negotiations that have taken place between farmers and banks and actually insist on write-downs or write-set-asides, and if he wants to scare banks away from further credit to farmers, that is how to do it.

We will continue to meet with the banks to ask for their co-operation. I will continue to pressure my federal counterpart to make sure the process is followed whereby the farmers will have an opportunity to take their case before the Farm Debt Review Board. Just because the moratorium has been lifted does not mean the farmer still does not have the option of going before the debt review board, which gives him a 120-day stay of proceedings. I would have to say that the chairman of the debt review board is working very hard to try to keep these farmers on their land.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I would like to ask the minister about the very serious deterioration we face in the province's sewer system. I hope the minister's answer is not to send everyone little brown boxes.

An hon. member: American-made brown boxes; by Priority Post.

Mr. Gillies: I wonder if the minister could tell us, in view—

Mr. Breaugh: You are off to a really good start.

Mr. Gillies: I have to learn not to throw myself off like that.

In view of the fact that both the municipalities and the sewer and watermain contractors have approached the minister about this very serious problem, in view of the fact that his own ministry estimates it will cost some \$1.5 billion to bring the municipal sewage systems up to some sort of acceptable level and in view of the fact that this is an imminent threat to our water quality, to our beaches and to our lakefronts, could the minister tell me what he is substantively going to do—apart from going after federal money, which is alluded to in the throne speech—to alleviate this very serious and pressing problem?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I would like to thank the member for directing his first question to me in

his new capacity today. I wish him very well, of course. I should indicate to the member that when the speech from the throne was being read by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, I saw the member was listening with a good deal of care to the words contained in the speech from the throne.

Part of the speech from the throne, the section dealing with the environment, dealt with the need for infrastructure renewal. I have met on a number of occasions with the municipalities and other groups and have indicated very clearly the position of Ontario that we are prepared to advance new and additional funds to assist not only with the regular programs they have in terms of meeting their requirements but also the situation the member appropriately refers to, which is the need for infrastructure renewal.

We will be devoting a substantial sum of money to that. I simply invited the federal government to participate, as it did through various programs in years gone by. I still invite it to do so, but I can assure the member, as I know he wants to be assured, that our money will be on the table regardless of what the feds do.

1450

Mr. Gillies: One of the most serious situations is right in the minister's own backyard in Fort Erie where an average of three times a month now, every time there is a major rainfall, raw sewage is being dumped into the lake system. His ministry's only response thus far has been to ask the municipality to put a moratorium on new construction and to tell them that they can continue to dump raw sewage into the lake system on a need-only basis.

In view of the fact that these seeming emergencies are coming up three or four times a month, every time it rains, I would like to ask the minister when he is going to put forward some thought and a meaningful program that will allow that municipality and other municipalities in the same position to rectify the situation rather than strangling the development and growth of that community by putting a moratorium on their building?

[Applause]

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The Leader of the Opposition, who was part of a government that cut spending in the field of the environment, applauds.

Mr. Grossman: That is not so. That is factually inaccurate.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I struck a nerve over there. It is not misstating at all and he knows it.

I want to answer the legitimate question of my friend the member for Brantford to indicate that is simply one example of many and he appropriately identifies those that exist around Ontario, which require a massive program for which I have indicated support on many occasions. The municipalities have indicated their support for it. In particular cases around the province there has been an acceleration in the flow of the funding and, in addition to that, a new grant formula.

For instance, for regional municipalities to which he makes reference, originally it was a 15 per cent grant regardless of what kind of work was being undertaken. I changed that formula in the regional municipality of Niagara, for instance, to meet those special obligations. It is now 33 per cent for sewage treatment plants and things of that nature.

Mr. Andrewes: The letter says 23 per cent.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: If the member listened carefully, I said on those components that are related to the environment, instead of simply for expansion and growth, it has been 33 per cent. For growth, it is 15 per cent, as the member points out appropriately.

In addition to that of course, I provided for a \$3-million pipeline to Smithville in order that the people of Smithville could have water, because the previous government allowed a transfer station, which had the largest concentration of polychlorinated biphenyls in the province in Smithville. The Leader of the Opposition was part of that.

I want to assure the member—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Pouliot: In the absence of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) who is taking a break, I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. The minister will no doubt be aware that the Workers' Compensation Board is out by about \$2 million by virtue and reason of failure of payments by five companies owned by Ken Buchanan. Let me bring to members' attention a few examples of the systematic and deliberate scheme employed by Ken Buchanan to bypass and, yes, cheat the system.

Wolverine Forest Products has 40 vice-presidents: vice-president cut supervisor 3, remuneration \$4,000 per annum; vice-president, assistant cut supervisor 9, \$9,400—more vice-presidents than Henry VIII had wives. Vice-president, assistant cut supervisor 15, remuneration \$2,862. This kind of deliberate exploitation of the workers for the mere sake of a buck has

been tolerated for the past four years. Finally, by way of a question, what is the minister intending to do to make sure the workers are protected?

Mr. Speaker: Minister, do you want to try to answer that now?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I should really take that question as notice, because I would feel somewhat remiss if I were to respond out of turn. But I think that one of the important things you have raised is something that, in fact, had been discussed in this Legislature some time back. I do not have time to look up Hansard, but one of your former highly regarded members, Jim Renwick, was talking about this particular issue and I added a dimension at that time that I felt was responsible, insofar as those companies that could leave our jurisdiction and leave that kind of funding outstanding.

At that time I made the comment that I thought there should be some method of bonding that would not allow those people to escape without meeting those obligations. Now, having said that, it is some of the feeling I have that there may be something that can be done to guarantee, as other contracts have guarantees, that in the event that someone were to leave, there is a method of paying those kind of moneys to workers' compensation.

Mr. Pouliot: By way of a supplementary, we are talking here about 2,400 workers. The minister's job, his mandate, his terms of reference, say that any stick of wood that is cut on crown land is somewhat under his jurisdiction.

This is not a mercantile mine. This is deliberate. This an attempt at leaving workers without protection.

We do not have any quarrel if he gets into business or makes a profit, or makes a political contribution. What we are saying is fair game should prevail.

Is the minister ready now to give us a commitment that, unless he shapes up, he will not be able to cut one more stick of wood in northwestern Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Of course, as I said, I addressed myself to the question as I had recalled some discussion about a guarantee. I am prepared to talk with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) to see if, in fact, we can give some guarantee, in response to the member's question.

On that aspect of it, I will talk to the minister and either he or I shall get back to the member.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. On January 22 I asked the minister if

he could confirm or deny media reports indicating that 48 of the 120 housing units allocated under the government's Renterprise program in the city of Barrie were being taken off the market.

As I have not yet received a response to this legitimate inquiry I posed on behalf of my constituents more than three months ago, I wonder if the minister might give us the answer today?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I will take that under notice and get back to the member in detail on that.

Mr. Rowe: Notice is not going to help my constituents who are going to be on the street shortly. In addition to the 48 units I mentioned a few moments ago, I am told that the city will probably lose another 15 or 20 units currently being subsidized by the Ontario Housing Corp. under his rent supplement program. The record of the minister is absolutely disgraceful. With 279 families already on the OHC waiting list, plus those who will lose their homes this year, I want to ask the minister what he plans to do now to overcome a 25 per cent loss in affordable rental housing units in the city of Barrie?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member knows of the concern that this government has about low income people who are having a hard time getting any affordable housing. The honourable member stands in his place and intends, I would say, to insult a very ambitious program, a program about which he himself, when he was in government, did nothing.

As a matter of fact, I will just take a minute of time to say the Renterprise program was to encourage the private sector to build affordable housing. It is an option to them if they want to do so or not. But for a moment, without entering into any great comparison, and I would never even attempt to say how much social housing that government did when it was in power, in 19 months we have committed 26,000 units of social housing. Then he says how disgraceful our record is. I would never have regard to his disgraceful way—that the backlog we have to catch up, 26,000 social housing units so far.

1500

WATER QUALITY

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. One of the many clichés in the throne speech was a statement that safe drinking water is an essential component of public health protection. In 1985, when I introduced a safe drinking water act for this

province, the minister indicated that he was working on a drinking water strategy.

Can the minister explain to the House why, even though he has been in office for almost two years, we are still working in this province with outdated guidelines for drinking water and we have no standards that are legally enforceable and that can assure the people of Ontario their drinking water is safe?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the member would know from her extensive research and study, the province conducts probably the most comprehensive drinking water testing you will find, certainly anywhere in North America. California has an interesting program, but I do not think it has as many parameters to test for as we do. I cannot speak for Europe, but I think that is safe to say probably in Europe as well, in terms of testing that takes place.

In addition to this—

Mr. Grossman: Thanks to the previous government.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I have obviously hit a nerve with the Leader of the Opposition, who now wants to claim credit for everything good that has happened. But I will get back to the member's question.

We have undertaken a number of activities the member is aware of that are designed to improve the water quality in this province on an ongoing basis. I think she will find that, while we always have to try to improve even more—we should always be striving to do so—on a comparative basis, the quality of our water is quite good. We will be working even harder to ensure that the sources of the problem are cleaned up and that the processes we use are as efficient as possible in delivering for the people of this province a quality of water that is absolutely essential and that I think they deserve.

PETITIONS

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: Yet again, another series of petitions.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

There are 109 signatures, bringing today's total to 786. There are more to come.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr. Andrewes: This petition comes from a number of members of an organization called the John Deere Retirees Association.

"The situation in the Welland County General Hospital, because of the lack of beds, has reached a crisis point. Recent local reports have mentioned the numbers of surgical procedures being delayed or cancelled and the fact that patients are being accommodated in hallways of emergency areas. We, the undersigned, therefore humbly petition the Legislature of Ontario to fund major increases in both chronic care and active care spaces in the Welland County General Hospital."

There are some 95 names on the petition.

TEST FLIGHTS

Mr. Wildman: I have a petition related to the low-level B-52 and F-111 jet flights across northern Ontario.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and in particular the Honourable James Bradley, Minister of the Environment:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"We are against the low-level flights of B-52 jet bombers and F-111 jet fighters. We petition the Ontario government to stop these flights at once."

It is signed by 20 residents of Algoma and Sault Ste. Marie.

MOTION

HOUSE SITTING

Hon. Mr. Nixon moves that, notwithstanding standing order 2(a), the House will meet at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, May 6, 1987.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable members would know that we are meeting at three o'clock so that the presentations to the first recipients of the Order of Ontario may be undertaken before the opening of the House.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

EMPLOYEE SHARE OWNERSHIP PLAN ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved first reading of Bill 11, An Act to provide an Incentive to Ontario Employees of Small and Medium-Sized Corpo-

rations to purchase Newly Issued Shares of their Employer Corporation.

Motion agreed to.

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: That bill was originally introduced for first reading.

PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 13, An Act to amend the Planning Act.

Motion agreed to.

ADONA PROPERTIES LIMITED ACT

Ms. Fish moved first reading of Bill Pr2, An Act to revive Adona Properties Limited.

Motion agreed to.

GREAT LAKES BIBLE COLLEGE ACT

Mr. Andrewes moved first reading of Bill Pr5, An Act respecting Great Lakes Bible College.

Motion agreed to.

1510

PLANNING AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. R. F. Johnston moved first reading of Bill 14, An Act to amend the Planning Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: This act, which I introduced last session, would change the Planning Act in such a way as to prohibit the development of manufacturing of nuclear weapons in Ontario by changing the official plans of Ontario's municipalities.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS ECONOMIC CONVERSION ACT

Mr. R. F. Johnston moved first reading of Bill 15, An Act to provide for the Conversion of the Technologies and Skills used in the Nuclear Weapons Industry to Civilian Uses.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: If I may make a brief comment, this is a companion bill that would deal with companies such as Litton Systems and perhaps General Motors, which in the city of London has recently undertaken a nuclear weapons contract, to assist those corporations to convert their operations to civilian uses. It

establishes a committee of workers, management and the community to develop a plan and to put aside a certain percentage of the profits of that corporation's military contract for the provision of benefits to those workers who may be laid off, for their retraining or for the adjustment of the various lines that they may be on.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Before the orders of the day, I would like to table a demographic profile of Ontario's provincial electoral districts based on the new boundaries and based on the 1981 census data. I think the members will find this interesting and perhaps useful.

Order 7, please, unless somebody has something else he would rather do today.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

Consideration of the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Ms. Hart moved, seconded by Mr. McGuigan, that an humble address be presented to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada, Knight of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, one of Her Majesty's counsel learned in the law, bachelor of arts, doctor of laws, colonel in Her Majesty's armed forces supplementary reserve, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.

Ms. Hart: Mr. Speaker, it is an honour for me to stand before you, before my colleagues on this side of the House and my colleagues opposite to move the adoption of the speech from the throne.

As I begin, may I compliment His Honour the Lieutenant Governor on his most excellent delivery of what must be one of the longer throne speeches in recent memory. His office symbolizes for all the people of this province the cardinal virtues of stability, civility and dignity. Personally, he brings to that office his compassion, his openness and his genuine affection for all of us whose lives he touches. For these and his many other sterling qualities, I honour him today.

I am reminded that the first time I met His Honour was exactly one year ago, just after I had been sworn in as a member of this Legislature.

The occasion was the festival of multiculturalism that is held in York East at this time every year. Both His Honour and I were enjoying the Greek, Filipino, Korean and Scottish dancing and the singing by children of many nations in the Thorncliffe Park School choir. It was an exuberant celebration of the fact that the face of Ontario comes in many colours and from many backgrounds and that we all benefit from that diversity.

I take pride in noting that His Honour's address also acknowledges and celebrates the differences in our many heritages. It flags this government's commitment to providing the same opportunities for all the citizens of Ontario to fulfil their potential in our education system and in our economy.

At the same time, we recognize the importance of retaining the language and heritage of birth. My personal hope is that our children may grow up, be educated and live their lives in a province that not only tolerates but also actively encourages many languages and cultures living together peacefully and productively in this rich mosaic we call Ontario. For that reason, I strongly endorse the initiatives in His Honour's address that call for the introduction of a comprehensive strategy to encourage multicultural diversity.

When I took my place in this august chamber a short year ago, I quickly discovered the special challenges of governing without a majority. The broad outlines of the legislative program had been set by agreement, but those all-important specifics were matters of great contention. I need only mention pay equity to make my point. However, at the commencement of this third session of the 33rd Parliament, my government has seized the opportunity to set forth boldly its vision of Ontario's future. It has not hung back, waiting and hoping for the comparative safety of a majority in this House. Instead, the speech from the throne proclaims the new Liberal agenda, one that I proudly and enthusiastically support.

This speech from the throne is the most proactive in recent years and contains many more specifics than is usual in a document of this kind.

Par exemple, nous poursuivrons activement avec la mise en application de la loi de 1986 sur les services en français. Cette loi renforce les droits des francophones de cette province et leur offre des possibilités nouvelles. Entre autres, mon gouvernement accroîtra la prestation à distance de programmes d'enseignement en français. De plus, un soutien accru sera fourni à

TVOntario pour lui permettre d'offrir des programmes d'études dans cette langue.

Such initiatives can all be related back to the three main directions that we believe are fundamentally important to our future. Our primary focus is on, first, restoring excellence in education, second, ensuring an internationally competitive economy, and third, acknowledging and implementing changes spawned by our changing demographics in a compassionate yet fiscally responsible way. It is my view and the view of my government that it is only by making large strides towards these three goals that Ontario and Ontarians will be able to achieve their best.

1520

Teachers are the front line troops in achieving excellence in education. We must work together with them to shore up the old literacies—the three Rs, reading, writing and arithmetic—and to find innovative ways to instil the new literacies of computers and other technologies. My government has shown its commitment to this partnership in the throne speech. There will be capital funding to modernize and alleviate overcrowding. More support will be given to resource development for teachers. Also, there will be a major focus on reducing the high school drop-out rate by implementing initiatives suggested both by teachers and by students.

There are obviously children who are falling through the cracks of our educational system. It is the intent and the challenge of my government to stop up those cracks and to ensure that each and every child develops as much of his or her potential as possible. It is only by maximizing our educational opportunities that we can be truly independent citizens. I believe that my government's throne speech charts a progressive, proactive administration of our educational system, and in so doing, takes a leading role in Canada in showing the way to the next century and beyond.

Just last week, I had an opportunity to see at first hand what a successful training strategy looks like. My riding of York East contains Canada's only training institute for crane operating engineers. It is a testament to the way in which government, labour and management can work together to achieve the goal of a highly skilled work force that can be readily placed in good jobs.

It is this type of initiative that is targeted and encouraged in the speech from the throne as a means of positioning Ontario's work force to be able to compete in the international marketplace.

My government acknowledges that with the rapidly changing technologies, jobs will not remain static as they once did. We have provided for support, training and retraining for workers throughout their lifetimes. We will also establish an industrial restructuring commissioner to assist workers and industries facing layoffs or shut-downs to explore creative alternatives. This is in step with our acknowledgement that change is the norm and that what we need is help with managing the change with the least possible dislocation.

Because I once practised transportation law, I am particularly pleased that my government has recognized that to be internationally competitive Ontario's transportation infrastructure must be renewed and expanded. In York East, we have already reaped the benefit of increased infrastructure funding for sewers and roads because they were for too long neglected by the municipality. Those needs are mirrored across the province and will be addressed. Hand in hand with our ability to move goods quickly and efficiently to markets is our ability to move people to and from their work places. That too is set forward as a priority by the government in the throne speech.

The third key direction set out in the new agenda had to do with Ontario's changing demographics. Nowhere are those changes more obvious than in my riding of York East. I represent proportionately more senior citizens than any other member of this House, and of those more are women than men.

Those very facts mean that the needs of my senior constituents are very different from what they would have been 20 years ago. Many are facing changes in their health and are placing different demands on our health care system. They hope to stay in their homes for as long as possible but need some physical assistance to do so. When they can no longer stay in their homes, they need affordable alternatives and a continuum of health care for the rest of their lives.

I am very pleased that my government has responded to those needs with a plethora of new initiatives having an overall objective of keeping our seniors as independent and healthy for as long as possible.

The integrated homemaker program will be expanded and enriched, and pilot projects will be developed in which one phone call will result in access to a full range of health and social services for seniors. May I be permitted to say that I believe York East would be an ideal laboratory to test and perfect these concepts for Metro, given

our demographics and my highly motivated senior constituents.

My government is taking a leadership role in providing funding and facilities to ensure that we are on the cutting edge of knowledge about ageing. To complement the recently announced multidisciplinary department of geriatrics at McMaster University, funds will be provided to increase geriatric-gerontological training across the province. A centre for promoting design improvements in consumer products for seniors is also proposed. Further funding is being extended for cancer research and for Alzheimer community support services.

Recognizing that retirement brings with it many changes, my government will establish a program to help ease those adjustments. It will also provide better access to community facilities and more social and recreational centres. Our goal is to encourage and assist the maintenance of active minds and healthy bodies. To do otherwise is to squander one of our most precious resources.

There is one particular initiative in the speech from the throne in which I hope I can be forgiven for taking great pride. That is the substantial amendment to the Nursing Homes Act. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), I played a role in steering that bill through committee. The result is, I believe, a large step forward in improving the quality of life for residents of our nursing homes. It sets out their rights and it provides public accountability for their management. I join enthusiastically with my government in urging its speedy passage into law. I also applaud loudly the commitments in the speech from the throne for additional government funding to improve the quality of life in nursing homes and to encourage the establishment of nursing homes tailored specifically to the needs of ethnic communities.

My government's direction in health care is towards health promotion and community-based health care. I am an ardent supporter of the change in emphasis away from institutional care and am very encouraged by my government's focus on community solutions. As a militant nonsmoker, I am also delighted that the Ministry of Health's smoke-free working environment will be extended to work places generally. Maybe one day soon it will cover even legislative committee rooms.

I have touched only lightly upon the three themes that form the backbone of the speech from the throne: excellence in education, Ontario's competitive position in the world economy

and changing needs spawned by the new demographics.

I have not even mentioned other laudable initiatives: those in child care, opportunities for women and accessibility to our system of justice. It is enough to say to my constituents and to this House that this document sets forth a blueprint for a caring, compassionate society, one that actively ensures that every Ontarian from the earliest age has the tools he or she needs to become an independent and productive citizen. This is the key to economic opportunity and cultural fulfilment.

1530

This government can point with considerable pride to an Ontario economy that is both strong and getting stronger by the day. I say "with considerable pride" because this government does its business well. We have buried, finally and without regret, the oppressive myth that only one party could manage well the business of this province.

But satisfaction in the strength of our economy is only a starting point. It is our obligation to ensure that the prosperity we enjoy continues, that the benefits of that prosperity are enjoyed by all our citizens in all parts of our province and that we lay down deep and strong roots to ensure that that prosperity continues.

Our challenge is to ensure that our young people are not only literate and cultured citizens, but that they have the skills necessary to enable them to lead this province into the next century. This government, in this throne speech, is committing itself, committing its energy and its moral imagination to the creation of a generation of creative, self-reliant, confident students able to lead this province into a more closely integrated and competitive world economy.

At the same time, this government, in its throne speech, is demonstrating its profound commitment to ensuring that this province continues to be a model to the world of a caring and compassionate society. We believe we are doing so in a creative way, a way that both protects the disadvantaged and ensures that all our citizens are able to use their skills and their talents throughout the course of long and productive lives.

I hope you will permit me to end my remarks on a personal note. It is now almost exactly a year since I entered this House. I did so as the representative of a riding whose residents show an extraordinary richness, diversity and depth. It is those residents whose interests and concerns have continued to energize me.

I have been particularly excited by the extraordinary creative energy of the senior citizens in my riding. I am proud of the fact that in my role both as a member of this House and as a parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health, I have been able to contribute to the creation of an institutional framework that will permit those senior citizens to use that creative energy for many years to come.

I am proud to move, on behalf of my constituents and on behalf of my government, the adoption of the speech from the throne.

Mr. McGuigan: It is an honour and a privilege for me to second the motion to adopt the speech from the throne. Today, I have the opportunity to second the motion of my colleague the dynamic and thoughtful member for York East (Ms. Hart). I believe she represents the openness of opportunity for women in this province facilitated by this government in the past two years; a recognition of the contribution and the important role that women have played and must continue to take in the shaping of this great province and this great nation.

This government has laid out the welcome mat and sent out the invitations. The challenge has always been there for women, but this government encourages them instead of daring them to participate. My colleague met this challenge, and she conquered. Now, as a member of this Legislature, she is taking on all the challenges we face and she is winning. I am proud to be associated with the member for York East and proud to be her colleague.

Like the member for York East, this government has met and conquered many challenges, the greatest of which are the barriers, long entrenched, which deserve no place in today's Ontario. Pay equity in the work force is only one of the barriers to equality for women.

Barriers of prejudice towards immigrants and ethnics in employment, housing or other areas of society are breaking down. They are breaking down because this government has made a commitment to multiculturalism. Recognizing Ontario as a sum of its parts, the ministers of citizenship and multiculturalism have promoted the appreciation of ethnic origin and encouraged those of ethnic origin to promote themselves.

My riding of Kent-Elgin is made up of people of a great many ethnic backgrounds. You will find social clubs representing several cultures of Europe in Kent-Elgin and other southwestern Ontario counties. The clubs serve as social centres, as a means of preserving their cultures,

and through their social activities they act as a bridge between cultures.

These people have brought their special knowledge of growing specialty crops and their special knowledge and experience in draining farm lands. They have brought their special skills as artisans and professional people, and they are represented on our marketing boards, our co-operative boards and our municipal boards. In fact, they are represented in every sector of society, and they have brought a special vitality to add to those of the two founding cultures.

I am proud also to be a member of the government that saw seniors as important enough to be represented by a minister of the crown. The minister has spoken often about the needs of seniors and the contributions they have made to the province in many ways. He has attempted to break down the barriers that face them in their attempts to maintain active, fulfilling lives as the elders of society. The minister has taken it upon himself to ensure that seniors will live their lives with dignity today and tomorrow. I am proud to be a member of a government that is determined to grant seniors laughter, fun and appreciation instead of pain, sorrow and shame.

I am proud when I read about programs such as the one in Emeryville, a community in Essex county where young adults, students, are adopting senior residents of La Chaumiere Rest Home. As one of the Belle River students in the program, Roger Zverina, says: "You see a kind of loneliness in them, so you want to help out. We need each other." Roger calls his adoptee, Jim Copeman, his best buddy. We do need each other, and I am proud of Roger Zverina and his friends, members of the Columbian Squires, for realizing this need, just as I applaud the minister for promoting the importance of seniors in our society.

We need each other. We need to help those who are suffering. Our hospitals, treatment centres and nursing homes need to be equipped to handle the growing complexity of our medical and psychiatric needs. Demands which grow hourly and change daily need a system designed to keep pace. This government has budgeted \$9.8 billion annually to keep pace. It has allocated hundreds of millions more to catch up, as a result of previously lagging budget requirements and better-than-expected revenues currently.

Health concerns regarding eye care, dental care, cancer treatment, mental health and alcohol and drug abuse are all recipients of much-needed funds from this government; and still they require

more. As we attempt to meet these demands, we must continue to improve their delivery and availability to our citizens. We must continue to strive for the best medical system possible, available to all our citizens equally, with no extra charges at the door for those who can afford them and a waiting line for those who cannot. This government and the Minister of Health are assuring us this access. The minister's persistence and perseverance paid off for the citizens of Ontario when Bill 94 became law.

The Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), who is minister without portfolio responsible for francophone affairs, has taken a giant step towards guaranteeing access as well. As of November 18, 1986, francophones in Ontario were granted the right to have services available to them in French. A legal guarantee of full provision of services comes into effect three years after this date.

It gives me great pleasure to note that Bill 8 was delivered with all-party support and in close consultation with Franco-Ontarians. With the French Language Services Act, the minister has ensured that everyone has the right to communicate in French with provincial government ministries and to receive government services in French in 22 designated areas of the province.

In Kent county, the town of Tilbury and the township of Tilbury East are included, while in Essex county, the town of Belle River and the townships of Maidstone, Sandwich South, Tilbury North, Tilbury West and Rochester are among the designated areas. In speaking with the people of Kent and Essex counties, I have become fully aware of the degree of their appreciation for the extension of French services by this government.

This historic bill will also formally recognize bilingual status for the Ontario government by affirming the right to use French or English in the Legislature, by translating all the statutes of Ontario into French, and from 1991 onward introducing and enacting all public bills in both French and English.

1540

The Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) are responsible for increasing access to the business and employment sectors. Many untrained workers have been able to gain extra skills training through Ontario's Training Strategy. Small and medium-sized businesses have been able to upgrade their workers' skills and thus remain viable in today's competitive economic climate. We have seen a

decline in youth unemployment over the last two years in Ontario, and the minister's successful Futures program, which served 50,000 youths, is to a great extent responsible.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, with assistance from his committee of parliamentary assistants for small business, has encouraged entrepreneurship through the new ventures program, which is seeing many young, intelligent and ingenious Ontarians become self-employed, making use of their particular talents and drive to venture forth, thus creating their own future.

The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney), whose dedication to his portfolio is well known and appreciated, has continued his efforts to give victims of wife abuse, child abuse and parent abuse access to a better life and a safer environment.

Personally, I look forward to these efforts alleviating a problem I have addressed, that of missing children. Perhaps, through his initiatives, along with those of the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes), the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and this House, we can greatly reduce problems causing the abduction, abandonment or running away of our children. The standing committee on social development has accepted the task of reporting on private and public efforts to alleviate the problem of many missing children.

The Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) has provided tough leadership in an effort to ensure our work force a safe and healthy working environment, and we are committed to protecting workers' pensions against the effects of inflation. Workers will not only feel safer on the job but also more secure in the job.

The Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) has continued to invest in facilities and programs that will provide municipalities and industry with a world-class tourism climate, improving their economic position and, at the same time, providing Ontario citizens with facilities for participation. Ontario is truly ours to discover. We must experience its beauty and natural wonders as well as the man-made heritage and tourist attractions such as Canada's Wonderland or Uncle Tom's Cabin and Museum, near Dresden in Kent county.

Just yesterday, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and I announced a \$100,000 tourist term loan for Greenview Aviaries and Game Farm of Morpeth, in my riding. We have a tremendous potential for tourism in Ontario and we must fulfil this. In southwestern Ontario, we could develop a greater industry around the Great

Lakes, Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. Rondeau Bay fishing is among the greatest anywhere, and the natural setting of Rondeau Provincial Park and Wheatley Provincial Park lures visitors from all around.

I am convinced we can and must harbour the opportunities that nature provided us, of course without detracting from its natural beauty. I am proud to have come from such a rich agricultural area with such tourist potential and I am very happy that the minister is working to develop tourism into a major provincial industry.

The Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) has spent nearly \$2 billion maintaining one of the best road networks of any country or province in the world, a network that gives Ontarians access to each other and our producers access to our trading partner to the south.

The Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) has made great headway in preserving and restoring our natural resources for generations to come. One area in which I am closely involved with him is the issue of high lake levels, flooding and erosion of our shorelines. Residents of our shorelines are in a difficult battle with Mother Nature, and the minister and this government have begun to establish a long-term approach to protecting the shoreline as a natural resource and alleviating the devastation that storms have caused recently to communities at the mercy of the lakes.

An hon. member: You have not done anything, Jim.

Mr. McGuigan: I hate to take credit for a natural drop in the water. The water has gone down approximately a foot. I really do not claim credit for that. It is Mother Nature.

An hon. member: We are going to give you credit for doing nothing.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) is not in his seat.

Mr. McGuigan: We have recognized our responsibility and are committed to doing our part to guarantee that the public has better access to the shoreline and, at the same time, that those who reside there continue to enjoy the beauty of the lakes and be more at peace when the beauty turns to a beast.

As well, we have addressed the short-term emergency requirements of these communities with \$4.5 million injected into the Shoreline Property Assistance Act and another \$700,000

for the provision of sandbags and free technical assistance.

The government has provided funding for the conservation authorities to implement its programs when mapping and management plans are completed. We have just recently received word from the federal Minister of the Environment that Ottawa is not interested in carrying a share of the responsibility for damages, yet the members of the Ontario government remain determined to be proactive, responsible leaders and not just reactive politicians. I am proud to be associated with a government that does not play politics with the homes and properties of people.

This government sees both the forest and the trees, and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) wants to make sure that generations to come will have trees to see, fish to catch and water to drink. He is the protector of the long-term health of our economy. This government believes in the "polluter pays" principle; that complying with environmental laws must be cheaper than violating them. We believe that environmental decisions should reflect the true cost of pollution to society and that today's society must deal with today's pollution. We believe we must tackle pollution at its source and not merely transport it from one medium to another.

The minister has not hesitated to tackle pollution at its source and, in fact, he has not hesitated to tackle the sources, including the US federal government on acid rain emissions which are poisoning our waterways, killing our trees and injuring our crops, as well as endangering our health. He has recently initiated a court action against the city of Detroit in an effort to force that city to incorporate proper pollution control devices on its proposed garbage incinerator. Without these environmental protection devices, harmful emissions from that incinerator will spill over Essex and Kent counties, Lake St. Clair and western Lake Erie.

The potentially toxic pollution could have very detrimental effects, and the minister and I want to ensure that all steps are taken to prevent this from happening. We feel we cannot stop because diplomatic attempts have failed.

This government has striven to be a world leader in environmental protection and the speech from the throne reiterates this commitment. The municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program, the spills bill, Countdown Acid Rain and recycling programs will help us to achieve a cleaner, safer environment. Enriched funding and shared programs with municipali-

ties, and hopefully with the federal government, will help us to maintain and rehabilitate our municipal sewage and water infrastructure at a time when this \$30-billion investment is in need of maintenance, repair and renewal. This direction is welcomed by all Ontarians.

It is evident from the speech from the throne that my government is striving for excellence in every sphere, including agriculture. It is for this reason that we have decided to move the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to Guelph where we have a world-class university. The ministry has already built a first-class, state-of-the-art, food-testing laboratory in Guelph, where we have also improved and upgraded our pesticides testing laboratory. By moving the ministry to Guelph, we will be linking the best talents from private industry, government and the university. Basically, we are reinforcing Guelph University as a world-class centre of excellence.

Although the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) has introduced some 60 programs since we took office, we are constantly looking for improvements to existing ones. Therefore, after many discussions with farm groups and other ministries, we have improved the farm tax reduction program and this will be announced shortly.

On our agenda, too, is the land stewardship program, which will encourage crop rotation and soil and water conservation. My colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Food has said on many occasions that this is an area where we can save a good part of the \$90 million in lost production caused by soil erosion. Farmers in the Rondeau Bay watershed in my riding have also recognized the complexity of this problem. A few weeks ago, I delivered a proposal from them to the minister. I know they will share my appreciation that this government is addressing the issue, and I can assure them that suggestions such as theirs are given the utmost consideration by the minister and this party's rural caucus.

We reaffirm our commitment to agriculture. Since we took office, we have increased the agriculture budget by 58 per cent. This is a recognition by our government that there are serious problems in the agriculture sector and it represents a commitment to helping our farmers through these difficult times.

The speech from the throne speaks of increased fairness in the marketplace. I am proud to be a member of a government that chooses to monitor the marketplace, give warnings when it strays and grant it the freedom to correct itself. Too often we have governments respond in panic

to outcries of unfairness, only to create far worse situations.

This government has adopted a thoughtful approach to marketplace problems. The increasing premium issue is an example. Recently, this government announced a program for capping insurance premiums while establishing a review process to justify insurance rates. We are awaiting Mr. Justice Osborne's report on no-fault and the optimum delivery of such a system. In the meantime, we are serving the industry notice that if it is to stay in the delivery business without more government intervention, it must deliver more equitable rates. This approach will serve the drivers of Ontario far better than one that is copied or designed without thorough review.

Government-run, no-fault auto insurance is not our preference, but should some altering of the delivery and type of insurance be required, Ontarians can be sure it will be best suited to the needs of Ontario drivers.

1550

The Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) and the Minister of Colleges and Universities are injecting much-needed funding and direction into our educational systems, preparing our young people for the challenge we face today and that we must meet tomorrow. We are adding to the excellence in our educational program. Ontario student assistance program funding has increased over 25 per cent in the last two years, and colleges have had an increase in funding of over seven per cent, representing a substantial commitment to excellence in post-secondary education that was lacking in the previous 10 years.

The Minister of Education has stood in a classroom of young preschoolers and said, "I want you to have the opportunity I have had, and more," and I know he is sincere. Just yesterday, he announced \$230 million in much-needed capital for school boards across the province.

We are taking steps to reduce the drop-out rate in our secondary schools and improve access to education in the north. We are fully aware that if Ontario is to have as fine an education system and as highly an educated public as it deserves, we must improve literacy programs for our newcomers and we must guarantee access to all Ontarians.

Our new Ontario of the future is evolving right now. The province is in the process of an economic and social revolution.

The shift to a 21st century economy is a particularly important process for Ontario. That

is because it is a shift away from an economy dominated by exploitation of resources and the production of manufactured goods. Instead, the future economy will be one in which knowledge and information will increasingly predominate. There will be an economy based more and more on the provision of services. Eight out of 10 jobs created in the next decade will be in the service sector of the economy.

Today, more than 162,000 Ontarians work in hospitals, while the auto manufacturing and auto parts industries combined employ only a little more than 92,500 people. Today, there are 38,000 people employed in iron and steel in Ontario, but that is not near the numbers employed by colleges and universities, with a task force of 64,000. Right now the service sector accounts for 73 per cent of the employment in Ontario and over 70 per cent of our gross provincial product.

The growth is in real estate, health care, education, management consultants, computer services, business and finance.

In short, the growth is in areas requiring specialized knowledge. That is why excellence in education is a priority in Ontario. It has to be. Right now, 34 per cent of all Canadians have some kind of post-secondary education. By the year 2000, that figure will be up to 50 per cent. Even today, someone without special skills or talents or with only a secondary school education can be at a crippling disadvantage in the search for employment.

The speech from the throne indicates that this government has set the plan so that our children will receive a complete and proper education and our workers will be trained with the skills needed to meet the demands they will face in the year 2000 and beyond.

The commitments made by this government and read by the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor will be costly. Over \$35 billion in expenditures is no easy sum to handle. Over the past two years, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), along with the cabinet ministers, has worked within a system of restraint—not restraint on what must be delivered, but on what can be delivered in the best manner and at the least cost. Essential programs have been enriched and new programs funded.

Ontario's needs have been met and our future needs recognized; a long-term plan is in place. We are spending money now for today. However, the throne speech indicates that the Treasurer has also begun to spend for tomorrow;

all this, I might add, while making up for the shortfalls in yesterday's spending.

Responsible management of fiscal capabilities, along with a buoyant economy, has generated better-than-expected revenues. The Treasurer has used this money in areas where it will benefit all of Ontario today and tomorrow. The plan for the 21st century is not a cliché. It is a necessity. The Treasurer is giving us the direction to meet this necessity.

This throne speech, as moved by the member for York East (Ms. Hart), is consistent with that of last April 22, which outlined the direction this government has taken in the last year. Last year's speech from the throne introduced many of the initiatives to which I have already referred, an indication that we are sticking to the commitments we are making. Yesterday's speech from the throne expands on many of these initiatives and introduces new ones. The people of Ontario can rest assured that this government will be fulfilling these commitments.

I am proud and happy today—proud that this government has recognized the need for excellence in education, recognized the need for training the work force with the skills to keep us competitive; proud, too, that we are moving forcefully to preserve and improve our water and air.

I am proud to be on this side of the Legislature with a party that recognizes the importance of our seniors, our women, our children, our agricultural industry and our ethnocultural community. I am proud to have a government that is compassionate, a government that is proactive, a government that is caring. This government has

guaranteed access for all Ontarians to all services in French and in English. This government is committed to breaking down all barriers and to being open and honest.

We are guaranteeing all Ontarians access to good government with responsible programs. The throne speech indicates this very clearly, and I consider it an extreme honour to second the motion of the member for York East to thank the Lieutenant Governor and adopt the speech from the throne as read.

On motion by Mr. Andrewes, the debate was adjourned.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, May 4, we will continue the throne speech debate with a response from the official opposition.

On Tuesday, May 5, we will have the third-party response, followed by private members' contributions to the debate, if time permits.

On Wednesday, May 6, we will have throne debate. The House sitting will not commence until 3 p.m. on Wednesday, due to the Order of Ontario ceremony taking place in the chamber from 1:30 to 2:30.

On Thursday, May 7, in the morning, we will consider private members' ballot items standing in the names of the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) and the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson). In the afternoon, we will continue the debate on the speech from the throne.

The House adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

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Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Wilson Heights L)
Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
Marland, M. (Mississauga South PC)
Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)
Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)
Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)
Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron-Middlesex L)
Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)
Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)
Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)
Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)



Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Monday, May 4, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, May 4, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: I ask for the unanimous consent of the House to recognize Israel's Independence Day.

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: May 4 is of great significance to our Jewish community around the globe and, indeed, to all freedom-loving peoples. It is the fulfilment of prophecies, prayers and dreams.

I would like to get the permission of the Speaker to recognize the presence in the gallery of Benjamin Abileah, the consul general of Israel, and representatives of Canadian Jewish religious, fraternal, cultural and philanthropic organizations.

Israel may be a small spot on the map of the world, but it is a great symbol of democracy. In spite of economic hardship, wars and threats of war, Israel has not lost its sense of purpose to shine as a beacon of freedom and democracy and to fulfil the promise of the ancient Hebrew prophets.

On this festive occasion, may all of us join in the hopes and prayers of Jewish peoples here and in Israel that the day may not be far off when the people of Israel and the nations of the world lay down their arms, turn their swords into ploughshares and realize the beautiful word of peace, shalom.

On behalf of the government of Ontario, I would now like to read the proclamation of Israel's Independence Day:

"Whereas the province of Ontario and the Canadian nation have prospered through the courage, dedication and industry of people of many nationalities and religions who have come to this land in search of freedom and opportunity; and

"Whereas we especially value the important contributions that our citizens of Jewish heritage have made to our province and country since first arriving in Canada in 1759; and

"Whereas a free, united, independent and democratic state of Israel was established 39 years ago on May 14, 1948; and

"Whereas it is imperative for Canadians to remember that the price of our precious freedom is eternal vigilance; and

"Whereas the observance of this anniversary fosters within us a deeper appreciation of freedom, liberty and democratic ideals in our multicultural society;

"Therefore, on behalf of the government of Ontario, we are pleased to recognize May 4, 1987, as Israel's Independence Day and we commend its observance to the people of our province."

Mr. Shymko: I join the member for Parkdale (Mr. Ruprecht) in the remarks he has just expressed on this very important anniversary. Those of us who watch television, recently—last night, I know—have seen the celebrations as they were celebrated by the citizens of Israel. This was a moment of sadness and a moment of joy.

First and foremost, the celebrations were those of remembrance as we watched mothers and relatives in the various cemeteries praying for those who laid down their lives so that some day the Jewish people would be blessed with the right to live in their homeland. Following those moments of sadness and sorrow began the celebration of joy that, indeed, this struggle of so many centuries, of millenia, had finally been accomplished and achieved.

On this very special day, honourable members will remember it was almost three and a half years ago when this Legislature unanimously passed a resolution that I had the honour of introducing, making this proclamation a reality. As I have always stressed, all of us want to say that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) of this government of this province follows a tradition established in the past, which hopefully will be continued in history by all governments of this province, to remember these very special days of independence, so that the independence anniversary of Israel and what it symbolizes and signifies will be repeated every year in this House.

We are reminded of the tragic Holocaust of the Jewish people at this moment, at this time of this celebration. Never again should this horror be repeated. We are reminded again of the right of the people of Israel to live in a free homeland: a right that cannot be questioned, a right that is

inalienable. We are reminded also of the efforts for peace in that region, a region that symbolizes and is the cradle of the three major religions today. We certainly wish the present government success in obtaining that peace so that Jerusalem continues to be a centre of prayer for Jews, Muslims and Christians alike.

As a member of the Ontario Legislature Committee on Soviet Jewry—many of us belong to this organization—I am also mindful of the plight of hundreds of thousands of Jews who are still fighting today for the very fundamental right to be able to live in the homeland of their ancestors. This is why we must remind ourselves as legislators and as lawmakers that these efforts must continue, notwithstanding some negotiations that presently are under way to make change, and I hope to see some change, in the policies of the present government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

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I would like to quote some statements and concerns that I know all of us have received from Jeanette Goldman, the chairman of the Committee for Soviet Jewry, statements that were echoed when we gave the Ida Nudel Award as we do every year, reminding ourselves that: "Soviet Jewry comprises 20 per cent of world Jewry. It is two thirds of European Jewry. That a people, which lost one third of itself a generation ago"—through the Holocaust—"simply cannot allow the disappearance of another 20 per cent in our time, is self-evident." It is self-evident to all of us but, unfortunately, it is not self-evident to Canadians generally and to many peoples in the world.

Since 1969, more than 260,000 Jews have been rescued or allowed to leave; but others, namely, the 400,000 who have indicated their desire to leave, to emigrate and to settle in their homeland, are denied this right. They are persecuted, fired from their jobs and many are incarcerated in prisons and concentration camps. Their struggle continues and their rights are being denied. We are indeed racing against time.

I would like to quote from the words that have been printed and passed in thousands of copies to all of us: "Vulnerable to dismissal from their jobs once they have submitted their documents to the visa office, Jews trying to emigrate" are constantly threatened by other laws, called redundancy laws, which encourage the firing of individuals from various managerial positions. Another statute was tightened recently so that a person out of work for only two months can be tried as a parasite of the state. Those applying to

leave are thus being forced into a no-win, catch-22 situation in which the likelihood of imprisonment has intensified.

We are reminded of Josif Begun against whom a most unsettling verdict was levied. This one-time mathematician, who became a qualified but unlicensed Hebrew teacher, was sentenced to seven years in a labour camp and five years of internal exile for anti-Soviet agitation. We are reminded of Ida Nudel. We rejoice with Anatoly Shcharansky's release. We could go on and on, but we must remember that anti-Semitism, which unfortunately permeates the policies of that particular state, must be reflected upon today.

An appeal was issued, for example, by an organization called the Anti-Zionist Committee for a massive propaganda effort aimed at the political unmasking of Zionism. Just listen to what these people are saying today in the Soviet Union:

"Lifted from a notorious Czarist forgery"—this committee officially sanctioned by the government of the USSR—"the propaganda drive thinly masked anti-Semitism by calling Judaism the source of 'Zionist evil;' the Torah and the Talmud are described as works preaching racism...." Imagine that; they are described as works preaching hatred and violence by this committee sanctioned and officially supported by the government of the Soviet Union.

"In a particularly vicious attack, Anti-Zionist Committee chairman David Dragunsky dubbed Zionism a 'man-hating ideology' based on the 'ideas and methods of Hitler.'" Can you imagine this as being said publicly, printed today by a state which sanctions that?

We must talk about it. We cannot be silent, because this is happening today. We must support not only any attempt at peace in the region of the Middle East but also attempts by all members of Legislatures in this free society and in the Parliament of our nation in Ottawa for the release of those who want to live in freedom in their homeland.

I want to conclude by saying that in welcoming the consul general of Israel and the representatives of all the organizations of the Jewish community in this province, we hope that the example set by the Premier and by this House in having this official proclamation will be followed by other provinces and some day, I hope, by our federal government and the House of Commons of the Parliament in Ottawa.

Mr. Rae: I want to add a few words on behalf of the New Democratic Party to the eloquent ones

that have already been expressed. It is entirely appropriate that Canadians and this assembly should be commemorating this day, principally for two reasons.

First, the Jewish community in this country and indeed in this province has played a critical role in the fight for the establishment of the state of Israel and in support for the state of Israel through many years. Perhaps it is also appropriate that we recall that today in Israel is not only a day of celebration but also a day of mourning and commemoration for the many soldiers who have died in the establishment and in continuing the fight for the existence and survival of the state of Israel.

It is appropriate and right that this assembly should take a few moments, as we are doing today, to commemorate, wonder at and express our support for the state of Israel, for Israel's survival in the truest sense and for its flowering in the Middle East as "a homeland for the Jewish people," in the words of the Balfour Declaration, and as an important symbol of democracy, learning and leadership in the Middle East as well as in the world.

It is also appropriate for another reason that I think it is important for us to recall. It is not only Canadian and Ontario Jews who played a crucial role in the establishment of the state of Israel and who have played such an important role in continuing support for Israel. It is also a fact that Canada, in its fledgling days on the international stage, played a crucial role in the establishment of the state of Israel.

Canadian diplomats who came from Ontario as well as from other provinces across the country—such as judges, and I think of Judge Ivan Rand, who played a crucial role during the 1940s in the disputes about the existence of the state of Israel and the partition of Palestine as it then was—in their official capacity as Canadians have played a crucial role in the establishment of the state of Israel and in attempting to find a formula for peace in the Middle East.

It is with a sense of pride that I speak in this House and say that we support not simply the state of Israel but also, as has been stated already by other members, this very act today of making this a special day in Ontario, commemorating in Ontario those Jews in Canada who have played such a crucial role in the support of Zionism and a democratic state in the Middle East. We also support all those Canadian soldiers who have been in the Middle East since 1956 and Canadians who have been working on the world stage, who have played such an important role in

attempting to find a permanent or lasting peace in a part of the world that has known no lasting peace for nearly half a century, and indeed long before that.

It is with a sense of pride and history that I enter briefly in this discussion to say how delighted I am to see so many of my friends here today, so many friends of all of us in the political process, and to say how proud we are to be participating in this commemorative occasion.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Ashe: On Thursday last my colleague from York Centre (Mr. Cousens) indicated to the government his concerns about the lack of an indication in the recent throne speech of a viable timetable for the construction of Highway 407. I support his remarks in that regard, but I have an even more urgent concern. It relates to the nonannouncement a month or so ago by the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) regarding the extension of Highway 401 from the centre of Scarborough at least into the centre of Pickering.

I have had the honour to be around these halls for about 10 years now.

[Applause]

Mr. Ashe: Thank you.

Frankly, I have never heard such a nonannouncement as that made by the minister a month ago.

Each day of the week—I am not talking about holiday weekends—we have a traffic shemozzle out through Pickering and the east end of Scarborough that is second to none. It starts at about six in the morning and goes through till nine o'clock, starts at three in the afternoon and goes through till seven, let alone the weekends.

The minister makes an announcement that they are going to start two years from now and finish seven to 10 years following that. I can well imagine, just at the turn of the century, the cutting of the ribbon at Brock Road in Pickering. That is not good enough for my constituents. The government has to get on with it and get on with it now.

1350

HOTEL CLOSURE

Mr. Morin-Strom: I would like to bring an issue of grave concern in Sault Ste. Marie to the direct attention of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). Seven weeks ago today, on March 16, the Windsor Park Hotel suddenly closed its doors as its owners announced that the hotel could not

meet operating expenses; 63 employees were thrown out of work with only two days' notice given before the closure. These employees are owed more than \$50,000 in unpaid wages and vacation pay. As well, many of them are owed even greater sums for up to 16 weeks' termination pay in lieu of notice and up to 26 weeks' severance pay. Seven weeks after the closure, these employees have still received nothing.

Surely the Minister of Labour is not going to tolerate further this kind of corporate terrorism directed at employees with up to 40 years of service who have been completely left in the lurch.

Consultations within his ministry have gone on for long enough. The hotel employees and I demand that the minister act immediately to ensure that his officials end the consultations and order the principal owners to immediately pay the employees all unpaid wages, vacation pay, termination pay and severance pay. In such a clear case of worker injustice, there is no excuse for the lack of action to date by the Ministry of Labour. When is this government going to prove to these workers that they have the right to be paid? Now or never?

CORPORAL JOHN CARSON

Mr. McGuigan: Today, on behalf of the member for Chatham-Kent (Mr. Bossy) and myself, I am pleased to announce in this House the name of one of the finest men of the Ministry of the Solicitor General. Corporal John Carson of the Chatham Ontario Provincial Police detachment became a hero yesterday, using quick thinking and quick feet to board a runaway freight train on the Canadian Pacific rail line out of Chatham.

Corporal Carson, a nine-year veteran, is to be recognized for his bravery in putting the call of duty above the risk of personal injury. Tackling a freight train, I suspect, is not in the training manual at Aylmer, but the corporal determined to board the train, which was moving at 25 kilometres per hour. He was able to grasp on to a ladder and climb to the cab of the locomotive. Then, for three minutes, Corporal Carson pushed buttons and pulled levers until he was able to bring the train to a halt.

Without Corporal Carson, the headlines in today's *Globe and Mail* could have been about a tragic train accident rather than a heroic effort to avoid one. I ask the members to join me in applauding this brave officer, and I ask the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) to pass on our

unanimous appreciation to Corporal Carson of the Chatham detachment of the OPP.

Just one final note: the brakes were on fire, and had they burned through the locomotive would have reached top speed and there would have been a very tragic accident.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Shymko: Four years ago, the then government of this province intervened directly to protect the 11,000 former Cadillac Fairview apartments from the unscrupulous gang of con artists, Rosenberg, Markle and Player, by placing these buildings under receivership. Last week, this government said the following in the speech from the throne: "A caring and compassionate society such as ours must mobilize its resources in an effort to ensure that affordable quality housing is available to all."

This is a first-class example of hypocrisy, and it will be the joke of the century if this government allows 10 per cent rent hikes on all these units, destroying my definition of affordable housing, which is a cap of 5.2 per cent. In the light of the tragic history of these tenants, this is highway robbery.

I would like the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to tell 89-year-old Mrs. Lafferty, the senior citizens, the single heads of families and people on fixed incomes that this is not a flip. This, indeed, is a flip that outdoes what Rosenberg did, because these new landlords, Halwood Properties and Westdale Construction, are there to make big bucks and move on, leaving these people stranded with increases of 10 per cent.

RAPE CRISIS CENTRES

Ms. Bryden: Last March 13, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) announced a new system of grants for rape crisis centres to start April 1, 1987. We are now into May, and many centres and their umbrella coalition have not yet received the first six-month draw on the funds. They are having to operate on bank overdrafts, local fund-raising and emergency grants. What is more, the ministry made the change in funding arrangements without consulting the coalition or the local centres which have been serving women in this province for over 10 years with very little help from the province.

It would appear that the Solicitor General is trying to destroy the centres' umbrella organization by giving it inadequate operating funds and no money for travel for quarterly committee meetings, which are essential to carry on the work of the coalition. The small increase in local

centres' grants cannot cover these travel costs as well as meet the growing need for services to women in crisis.

I urge the Solicitor General to sit down with the coalition and revise his grant proposals to ensure that it and all the centres can continue to meet adequately the needs of victims of sexual assault in this province. I also urge him to reconsider his decisions not to cover any payroll costs and to make no grant commitments beyond one year.

I drew this situation to the minister's attention last March. He has not yet responded to it.

DR. COLIN LAINE

Ms. E. J. Smith: I rise today to recognize a significant achievement acknowledging excellence in the field of education. Dr. Colin Laine, a professor at the Centre for Communicative and Cognitive Disabilities at the University of Western Ontario, has been named the winner of an International Teacher of the Year Award by the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children. Dr. Laine is the only teacher in Canada and one of only 12 people so honoured worldwide.

Dr. Laine joined the UWO faculty of education last fall after 15 years as a teacher, researcher and provincial director of special education in British Columbia. He is currently conducting research into gifted handicapped students at Western.

We in London are proud to have a specialist of such distinction working in and contributing to our community, and we are proud of the contribution he can make to Ontario.

ROB DUCEY

Mr. Barlow: It is with a great sense of pride and pleasure that I rise today to give special recognition to a resident of Cambridge, a young man who played his first professional ball game as a Toronto Blue Jay this past weekend. I am speaking of Rob Ducey. Rob is the only Canadian player on the Blue Jays team. He got a run-scoring single in Friday's game and the winning run in Saturday's game.

The people of the Cambridge constituency are extremely proud of their home-town boy and wish him every success as a professional ball player.

1400

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am pleased to report to the House on the constitutional discussions held

by first ministers last Thursday and to table the agreement in principle that was reached. A copy of the agreement will be made available to each member.

The Meech Lake accord ensures that Canada's Constitution will belong to all Canadians. At the same time, it indicates to other regions of Canada an understanding of their underlying concerns and a willingness to deal with them expeditiously. It further commits the federal and provincial governments to a regular consultative process on economic and constitutional matters.

The agreement reached at Meech Lake is another step in Canada's continuing search for a workable balance among several competing demands: strengthening our national integrity, sharing economic opportunity across all regions and reconciling the needs of our two founding linguistic communities.

Cette entente repose sur plusieurs réalisations antérieures. Elle reflète les fondements de la Confédération de 1867. Elle donne suite au ferme engagement national exprimé dans tous les partis du Canada il y a sept ans, à l'occasion du référendum qui a eu lieu au Québec. Elle ajoute aux innovations de la loi Constitutionnelle de 1982. Elle permettra de reconnaître dans la constitution d'importants principes qui sont justes et équitables pour tous les Canadiens.

This agreement was possible because of the leadership displayed by the Prime Minister and my fellow Premiers. Moreover, it is a testament to the framework established earlier in this decade by Prime Minister Trudeau and the Premiers of the day. Let me summarize its elements briefly.

D'abord, l'entente reconnaît que le Canada est composé de deux principaux groupes linguistiques et dans ce contexte le Québec forme une société distincte.

Second, two aspects of our constitutional amending formula will be changed. The current provision, under which provinces can be compensated for opting out, has been extended to all matters where provincial jurisdiction is transferred to Parliament.

The other aspect relates to section 42 of the Constitution Act of 1982, which focuses on the major institutions of Canadian federalism, such as Parliament and the Supreme Court. Future amendments to this section will require the approval of Parliament and all provincial legislatures.

The third area of agreement concerns the Supreme Court of Canada.

L'existence de la Cour Suprême sera enchâssée dans la constitution, de même que l'exigence selon laquelle trois des neuf juges doivent être choisis à même le Barreau Civil.

The federal government will continue to appoint the justices; however, appointments will be made on the basis of lists submitted by individual provinces.

Quatrièmement, le gouvernement fédéral sera autorisé à signer des ententes avec les provinces en matière d'immigration, et ces ententes seront reconnues dans la Constitution.

Ottawa will retain the power to establish the broad immigration policy framework for Canada.

Fifth, the Constitution will, for the first time, explicitly recognize the spending power of Parliament. Provinces will be able to opt out of national programs in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction and receive reasonable compensation if they undertake their own programs compatible with national objectives.

The sixth and final area of agreement requires that at least two annual meetings of first ministers be held, one on the economy and one on the Constitution. In this regard, first ministers committed themselves to intensive consideration of further constitutional reform in the areas of Senate and fisheries. Consideration of Senate reform will include such matters as role and functions, powers, the method of selecting Senators and the distribution of seats. In the interim, until Senate reform is accomplished, the federal government has agreed to appoint Senators only from lists proposed by individual provinces.

The people of Ontario have always been committed to nation building. As one of the founding provinces, our people are concerned about the health and vitality of Canada as a whole.

Les Ontariens se souviennent avec fierté de John Robarts et de sa vision exprimée par la conférence sur la confédération de demain en 1967.

The agreement, in November 1981, to patriate the Constitution was an exercise in nation building in which Bill Davis, my predecessor, played an important role. Their contributions have set a high standard of achievement. They provided much of the inspiration for the role we were able to play at Meech Lake.

Over the next few weeks, our agreement in principle must be drafted into constitutional language. On the weekend I spoke with the Prime Minister, and he indicated that the federal

government will be circulating a draft as soon as possible. When a text is agreed to, this Legislature will have a full opportunity to debate a resolution approving the proposed constitutional amendments.

Tous les députés de l'Assemblée Législative ont un rôle important à jouer en vue de construire un Canada meilleur pour tous les Canadiens. J'anticipe ce débat avec joie, parce qu'il permettra à l'Ontario de continuer à jouer un rôle essentiel dans l'édification de notre nation.

All members of this House have an important role in building a better Canada for all Canadians. I look forward to this debate as Ontario continues to play its vital role in nation building.

RESPONSES

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: I am pleased to congratulate the Prime Minister, the Premier of Ontario (Mr. Peterson) and his nine colleagues on the historic agreement in principle reached at Meech Lake last Thursday night. The spirit that helped achieve this agreement in principle must now govern the way in which it is given more detailed and substantive form.

As the officials of all 10 provinces in Canada pursue that painstaking task I am duty bound, as Leader of the Opposition, to put questions of substance on the record today so that the government of Ontario can be fully informed as to which answers my colleagues and I will require prior to any ratification vote on the accord in this House.

If I may beg the indulgence of the House, I should like to remind my friends in the other two parties of some differences in emphasis on constitutional matters that are very much part of the contemporary historic profile of the national and Ontario Conservative parties.

Since the beginning of the distinguished leadership of Mr. Stanfield, our national party has had a distinctly decentralist bias, reflected by notions like "deux nations," a proposition associated with Marcel Faribault, a close adviser of Premier Johnson and a federal candidate for Mr. Stanfield in 1968.

As some in this House may recall, Premier Johnson, who supported both Quebec nationalism and federalism, did so under the banner of "égalité ou indépendance." That tradition of commitment to a federalist nationalism as a critical bulwark against separatism is an important part of my party's federal and national tradition. It continued under Mr. Clark's leadership and is, I believe, an important and noble part

of our party's national mission. As Conservatives such as Mulroney, Clark and Davis campaigned alongside Liberals such as Chrétien, Ryan and Trudeau in the Quebec referendum, the anti-separatist commitment was sustained to nonpartisan victory.

I make the point because it puts the accord reached by the Prime Minister, our Premier and their nine colleagues in a historical perspective, which is important in the context of the challenge ahead.

As an Ontario Conservative in the great tradition of Robarts, Davis and Miller, I must reflect on what our historical context is. That context seeks to contribute to national balance by opposing the weakening of the national government's powers and prerogatives. To fail now to defend that principle simply because we share the same politics as the government of Canada and five of the provinces, would be tantamount to Bill Davis not having supported Mr. Trudeau in 1981-82 simply because they had different partisan allegiances.

I am not in public life to take the easy way out. Embracing our responsibility as official opposition in this House requires that we put to the Premier these questions, which I am confident he will be eager to respond to as soon as available details make that convenient for him.

1410

1. Does section 1(b) of the accord, namely, "the recognition that Quebec constitutes within Canada a distinct society," mean that quasi-national status is afforded Quebec because the majority of its residents are French-speaking; and if so, what will that mean for national broadcasting, minority language rights in Quebec and the rights of non-English- and non-French-speaking Canadians in Quebec? What constraints does this and section 3, affirming the role of Quebec's parliament and Canada's relevant to preserving this "distinct society", impose upon the ability of the Parliament of Canada to serve and legislate for all Canadians?

2. Will the provisions on immigration provide for different immigration rules for each province? Will freedom of movement within Canada for new arrivals be diminished? Can the Premier assure this House that people will not be arbitrarily forced to one province or that the unification of families will not be frustrated by that provision? Would Ontario propose such an agreement for itself; and if so, what would Ontario propose for such an agreement?

3. Can the Premier provide this House with specific definitions regarding "reasonable com-

pensation to any province that does not participate in a future national shared-cost program in an area of exclusive jurisdiction if that province undertakes its own initiative or programs compatible with national objectives"? For example, would child care, post-secondary education, health care, pensions and language rights be part of this provision?

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Grossman: I have perhaps 30 seconds more. May I have unanimous consent?

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Agreed to.

Mr. Grossman: Finally, what measure will Ontario take to ensure that the value of citizenship is not diminished from province to province in this country?

I feel certain that the Premier and his staff would have had full assurances on these matters prior to Ontario's signature on the accord, and we urge that those assurances now be shared, or very shortly shared, with this parliament.

I offer these questions in good faith as someone who sincerely hopes we can have unanimity in this House on this issue. I trust the government will respond in due course with that shared, same hope in mind, as we seek to be able to offer the unanimity that would be so important in this circumstance.

Mr. Rae: First of all, I want to congratulate the Premier on the role that I know he played, not only during the discussions on the day in question but also on the days prior to that time. I think it is important that on these relatively nonpartisan occasions we recognize that Ontario's voice was, I know, present and heard. I want to say to him and to the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) that in my discussions with others involved in the process, the efforts of the government of Ontario were appreciated, and I think it is important for us, in a spirit of some generosity, to reflect that.

Let me also say as one of the few members in this place who was a part of the House of Commons during the first round—the member for Chatham-Kent (Mr. Bossy) and I were there together—I felt a personal sense of partial success and partial failure in the sense that we did not include Quebec in the original round. I think it is a moment of tremendous historical importance that a formula has apparently been found, a way has been found that includes Quebec as part of the Constitution.

Si nous voulons avoir une constitution fédérale, il est absolument essentiel que le

Québec soit une partie intégrale de cet accord, et le fait que le Québec n'était pas une partie de l'accord de 1981 et 1982 était pour moi, personnellement, comme participant dans ce processus, une sorte de tristesse et nous avons, je crois, accomplis quelque chose d'important.

We have done something important, but in the very brief time allowed in this initial discussion I want to raise some points as well as the ones that have been raised by the leader of the Conservative Party.

I must say first of all that my primary regret about this whole process is that we now have the general apparent consensus or the conventional wisdom that in a sense the last piece of the constitutional puzzle has been put together. As long as we have no national consensus with respect to the rights and historic position of our aboriginal people, none of us in this House should feel that we have somehow a document nationally which expresses the true nature of the country. I regret very much the sense that the momentum towards including our aboriginal people in that process appears now to have faded in the face of other agenda items which are the particular concern of one province or another.

I speak out of some real personal sense of frustration, and indeed I know many native people seeing the headlines in the paper saying the last piece of the puzzle has fallen into place will feel that they have once again been simply left out of a picture which in my view should very much be as much theirs as anyone else's in this country.

I have some concerns about the fact that section 42, with respect to national institutions, has been placed in what I regard as something of a straitjacket. I am intrigued with the fact that those provinces that are most concerned with Senate reform have agreed so readily to that particular formulation that requires unanimity before there can be any changes. Before we can move to any changes in the nature of representation—the House of Commons perhaps a turn to proportional representations—we need now, according to this formula, the consent of all provinces. If we are going to have reform of the Senate, we need to have the consent of all the provinces. If we want to create any new provinces, we have to have the consent of all the provinces.

If I may say so, that is a very tough test and I would be interested in future discussions in this House in determining just how much consensus, either informal or formal, has been arrived at between our Premier and other Premiers with

respect to the next item on the agenda, which appears to be Senate reform. I would have thought that if he were really interested in Senate reform, perhaps a slightly more lenient formula might have made the most sense; but then, I was not there.

I am delighted to see the Premier referring to this document as an accord. I can only say that I am quite confident the Premier will be interested in living up to the terms of this accord to the same degree and to the same letter as he no doubt is with respect to other accords which he has been involved in and has signed.

ORAL QUESTIONS

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. Pope: My question is addressed to the Solicitor General. Four days ago, we engaged in a series of questions with respect to ongoing Ontario Provincial Police investigations. The Solicitor General will have had four days to consider his nonanswers of April 30, so I will repeat the question and I hope the Solicitor General will be more forthcoming on these matters than he was last Thursday.

Can the Solicitor General tell us, in the light of what he said, which of the OPP investigations on Wyda Systems, LSI Applications and the Vaughan land sales have been completed and which ones are now in the hands of the Attorney General (Mr. Scott)?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: That information is not here to be presented today. As we said before, there are ongoing investigations in all of the areas mentioned by the honourable member. In due course, they will be presented to the Attorney General so that he may decide as to what action, if any, must be taken as a result of those investigations.

Mr. Pope: We now have the Solicitor General of this province saying that he does not intend to answer the question. That is his answer on three Ontario Provincial Police investigations that involve members of his party. He just stood up and said he does not intend to answer.

Last Thursday, he said that not all of the investigations were complete. We are entitled to know which ones of those investigations have been completed, where they are now and why no action has been taken. The Attorney General acted within one day of receipt of the report on the Solicitor General's conduct in the Kingston area. Why is there no action on these investigations?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: If the member were to check Hansard correctly, I believe I said there are ongoing investigations. They have not all been completed. I will be happy to file with the honourable member a written answer to his question as to which are completed and whether they are with the Attorney General.

Mr. Pope: This answer and attitude towards open government is entirely consistent with the conduct of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the cabinet on these matters from the very outset: no information whatsoever. We are entitled to know, by the minister's own words, which of those investigations have been completed and where they are now.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I believe the honourable member may not have listened to my former answer; therefore I will repeat it. If he wishes a written statement about exactly where they are, as I said, they are still ongoing and it will be months yet before some of them are even completed. Following his question last week I checked, and the official said it will be several months before some of them are completed because of the extensive investigation that is ongoing.

Mr. Pope: Then we will turn to the Attorney General.

Last Thursday, the Solicitor General indicated that, as a matter of course, these Ontario Provincial Police investigations would be sent to the office of the Attorney General. Can the Attorney General explain why that is the case?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I can tell the honourable member that I understand his observation to be correct and that the reports, when completed, will be delivered to my office.

Mr. Pope: The members of this government seem to have a problem answering elementary questions on this matter. I asked him why OPP reports were being sent to the office of the Attorney General. Why are they being sent to his office? Is he going to make the decision on whether charges are going to be laid? Is that not the function of the crown attorney and the police? Is he now making the decisions on matters involving the Liberal Party?

Hon. Mr. Scott: The honourable member will know from his short and, I gather, somewhat disruptive period as Attorney General that the normal routine when an investigation of this type is conducted—in which case there may be some desirability to obtain legal advice with respect to whether charges can be laid—is to have those reports delivered to the Attorney General, and I

understand that will happen in this case. The honourable member can be certain that I will report to the House and to him as early as I can.

Mr. Pope: That is a rather interesting difference from the Premier's own statements on June 24, 1986, with respect to the Morgentaler charges, in which he said that the Attorney General had no role in directing a police investigation of the laying of charges. When it comes to the members of the Liberal Party, the Attorney General is going to make the decision on a matter that he was involved in a meeting with the Caplans on. He is going to make that decision, and that is entirely inappropriate. He should get out of it and allow the police to lay the charges.

Hon. Mr. Scott: A little practise of law in Cochrane South will probably improve the honourable member's capacity to make elementary legal judgements. As he knows perfectly well, there is a major distinction between the two examples. In the case of a criminal charge, whether it be laid following an OPP investigation or following a normal municipal investigation, it is the obligation of the informant, usually a police officer, to make an oath that he believes the accused to be guilty in all probability. He makes that oath; he makes that determination; he swears that information. If he requires legal advice as to the validity of the evidence, whether it can be used in proof or anything of that type, he invites the opinion of either the crown attorney in the county in which he works or the crown law office under the Ministry of the Attorney General.

Mr. Harris: That is bafflegab.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The member may regard it as bafflegab but the reality is that is the way the system has always worked and will continue to work in this case. When those reports are available, the honourable member can be certain that I will report to the House as promptly as I can.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. Rae: In the absence of the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter), who I know had to leave a little early today, I would like to ask a question of the Premier about pensions.

Can the Premier tell us whether it is his understanding that it is quite possible that the Friedland task force, which has been established by the government to study the question of pension indexation, could in fact conclude that pension indexation is simply not possible, too expensive or in some way not in the cards? Is it

his view that that is a possible outcome of the Friedland committee?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: No, that is not my understanding.

Mr. Rae: If that is the Premier's understanding, I wonder if he can explain—I was going to ask this directly to the minister but he is not here—why the minister would say in committee the exact opposite of what the Premier has just said in this House. Can the Premier explain why the Minister of Financial Institutions said in the committee the other day, and I am quoting directly from the transcript: "And they come back and say, 'We have looked at it; it makes no sense,' and that you should abandon your policy even though you are in favour of it, or this is what you should do at this level"? Can the Premier tell us why the minister would have said that?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I cannot tell the member why the minister would say it. I cannot tell him why a lot of people say a lot of things, including some of my friends opposite on occasion. If in fact he said it, I hope the member will ask him about it and what he meant by it.

Mr. Rae: He is the minister and the Premier is supposed to be in charge over there. I thought that was still the operation.

If the Premier does not know why the Minister of Financial Institutions said it and he is representing the government at the committee, and the Premier says he is in favour of pension indexing and it is not possible for the Friedland committee to come up with any other answer, can the Premier tell us why the legislation is silent on the question of pension indexing? Why does he not have something in the legislation that indicates where the government wants to go, since legislation is supposed to be the way we do things around here?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I cannot answer my honourable friend's question about who is in charge over here, because if I listened to my honourable friend every time we did something good over here he would maintain that he is in charge over here. Why is it that when we do something wrong I do not hear the same response from my honourable friend?

That being said, as the member knows, the legislation as introduced did not deal with that particular issue. The government has stated its view on indexation. It has appointed the Friedland committee, along with I believe Mr. Jackson and the very esteemed Mr. Pilkey, to look into these questions. I know that my honourable friend has direct contact with Mr.

Pilkey. He would make sure that Mr. Pilkey knows his views on these subjects, but they are looking at the implementation of this complicated area.

We do have a bill in place that we hope can be passed quickly to bring a real effect to pension reform that is so necessary. We have been dealing with this for a very long period of time, on matters of portability, vesting and a whole range of other issues that we think will bring our pension laws into the modern age. I hope my honourable friend will support that piece of legislation so that we can move quickly on this matter; and we will consider, obviously, the report of the Friedland committee when it is available.

Mr. Rae: I am rather astonished that the Premier would be giving a position in the House that is completely contrary to the one given by his minister in committee and would say there should be no confusion as to what the position of the government is. We are only human and it is difficult for us to draw any other conclusion than that the government does not know where it is going on this question.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr. Rae: While we are discussing the question of confusion and not knowing where to go, I would like to address my next question to the Minister of Labour. The minister will know that over 130 workers in Wallaceburg received their notice last week from Continental Can advising them that they would no longer be employed on September 1 and that the company would in fact be closing its doors.

Can the minister explain what recourse the workers have when they were assured by their former employer—that is to say, Nestlé, who owned the company prior to its recent sale to Continental Can—during negotiations in October, just a few short months ago, that their jobs were safe for three years and that if they made concessions those jobs would remain safe, which concessions they made? What legal recourse do those workers now have in the province for which the minister has some responsibility in terms of labour laws and employment standards laws to protect those workers against this kind of action?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable gentleman knows there is no legal recourse for those workers who may have opted to give concessions during the collective bargaining which just concluded at Continental Can in Wallaceburg.

Mr. Rae: It seems to be a one-way street in the province when it comes to what happens to working people. Can the minister explain why his government has done nothing in terms of plant closure legislation, severance legislation, seniority legislation—nothing at all dealing with those issues—when his leader promised the people of Ontario there would be that kind of legislation under a Liberal government and when he signed an accord saying specifically that this kind of legislation would be forthcoming? Can he explain to those workers why he has so clearly and categorically broken his word to those people as well to thousands of other workers in Ontario?

1430

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I ask my friend to look at the timetable on these matters. I can certainly assure him that as it pertains to severance pay and other protections in terms of labour adjustment—and labour adjustment is necessary in some situations—these matters are under consideration. I can also indicate to the honourable gentleman that he may want to look at the throne speech and at the proposal for an industrial restructuring commissioner.

Finally, when my friend suggests that no protection has been given to the workers of Ontario in terms of severance pay, I refer him not only to Bill 128 but also to the government's ongoing efforts to protect the present severance pay legislation, and indeed any future enrichments we might propose, from the attack on that severance pay legislation by the federal government.

Mr. Rae: The fact of the matter is that there is no mention of severance pay in the throne speech. There is no mention in the throne speech with respect to legislation dealing with plant closures. There is nothing in the throne speech or indeed in legislation that gives any kind of assistance, guarantee or help to these workers. There is no way in which he can force a justification, no way in which he can figure out why Nestlé sold to Continental Can and whether there is anything else going on in the marketplace and no way in which he can ask or deal with any of these questions.

In his House leader's list of legislation, which he has presented to other House leaders with respect to areas and items that are going to be a priority for the government, can he tell us why the Bees Act is mentioned by the Liberal Party when it comes to its priorities but there is no mention of severance pay and no mention of anything dealing with problems facing working people in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You mean that incomplete list; that effective list of initiatives.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think I heard the House leader give the answer. Perhaps my friend will want to note that he referred to the fact of an incomplete list, a list that indicates the priorities of the government at this time. When these matters are ready to proceed, they will proceed.

POLICE INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. Pope: Following on questions to the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), I have a question for the Premier. Last Thursday, the Attorney General admitted there was at least one report completed and the Solicitor General indicated at least one report was completed; not all of them had been completed.

Published reports in the newspapers several weeks ago indicated that the Attorney General would be receiving the Vaughan land sale report within two to three days. We now have the Attorney General saying that nothing has been referred to him, whereas the Solicitor General said these would automatically be referred to him when completed. Can the Premier sort out today this mess between his own Solicitor General and Attorney General, and intervene and provide for the immediate tabling in this House of all interim draft and final reports on these three investigations?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not intervene in police matters, as the honourable member will know. From my point of view, it was answered very clearly. Obviously, any confusion is in the member's mind. He can ask the Attorney General again, if he wants him to repeat the process that goes on in these matters. I am sure it will be scrupulously adhered to. He has said he has not got those reports.

Mr. Pope: We know for a fact that at least one of these reports exists. Is the Premier going to intervene? The Solicitor General has said one thing, that these would automatically be referred to the Attorney General. The Attorney General is saying another thing, that it is up to the police. That is completely at variance with what the Solicitor General is saying. Why does the Premier not intervene, get this mess cleaned up and get those reports out and charges laid?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The member may know something I do not know or the Attorney General does not know. If he does, he should please come forward. Perhaps he even has a copy of it. If he has a copy of it, he should please table it in the

House. I have no problem with that. I can tell him that is not the information I have.

ADULT EDUCATION

Mr. Allen: I have a question for the Minister of Education. At a time when school boards across this province are enrolling increasing numbers of adults in programs, both day and night, of studies they need to get on with for the jobs they are trying to access—programs in secondary credit courses, English as a second language, French as a second language, programs in literacy and basic education—why, in those circumstances, did the minister send this letter on February 18 to the Association of Large School Boards in Ontario, putting access to space in the school system for adult day programs virtually at the bottom of the heap and thus undermining many innovative programs of boards around this province?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank the honourable member for his question. Obviously, I do not accept his assessment of the content of the letter to which he makes reference. I sent the letter to have school boards observe that they must also, as we look to the future, plan for the requirements of those young people whom the Education Act compels to attend school. While I recognize that school boards across the province have done a great deal of very creative work in the area of adult and continuing education, I do not want school boards, as we look to the future in planning for the requirements of our student population, to lose sight of the fact that we also have important obligations to those young people of compulsory school age.

As the honourable member knows, in some areas of the province we have very significant pressure, in so far as accommodation is concerned, and I am expecting that school boards are going to continue to work with the ministry to provide for the needs of not just those in the adult and continuing area, as they have so very well, but also, where necessary, to meet the very pressing needs of those young people who are compelled by the Education Act to attend elementary and secondary education.

Mr. Allen: I think we all recognize those pressing needs, but there are a lot of people out there with a lot of different futures they are trying to secure.

Does the real and fundamental reason not lie in the very short statement by ALSBO about the state of adult education in this province; namely, that there is now in Ontario “a lack of public policy in the field, no vision of adult education in

government, an almost complete lack of province-wide information base to allow for planning and analysis, a confusing legal situation concerning the educational rights of adults, a lack of definition of teacher status in continuing education and an uncertain funding and a regulatory milieu”?

Will the minister not tackle at least one small corner of that list of pressing problems by, for example, amending section 32 of the Education Act to lift the 21-year age limit, and guarantee adults and recognized adult programs equal access to school space on the same basis as regular resident pupils in the system?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Again I say to the honourable member that I do not share the assessment to which he made reference in the first part of his supplementary question. As I have indicated to the school community as recently as this morning when I met with the Metropolitan Toronto trustee group, I will be sending a letter of clarification to trustees so there is no confusion as to what I intended in the initial letter.

I repeat, what I intended to address there is the whole question of new vacant space in the schools of Ontario. That is the issue to which I have directed the attention of the school community. I expect that everyone in the educational community is going to work to meet not just the needs of the adult community but also to pay attention, as new vacant space is coming on stream in the schools of Ontario, so that those young people of compulsory school age are going to be provided for as well.

WYDA SYSTEMS (CANADA) INC.

Mr. Gillies: My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology regarding the latest chapter in the resolution of the Wyda scandal.

Last Thursday, Mr. Justice Catzman approved the sale of the major asset of Wyda, the solid modeler program, for \$116,000 plus the promise of future royalties. The minister will recall that the province invested over \$3 million in this company.

Both of the offers for this technology spoke to the requirement of a further six months to two years of testing to determine the worth of this technology. This was certainly not the information put before us by the ministry officials. How could his officials be so completely wrong in estimating the worth of this company and how could he be so completely off in determining the amount of time they would need to be able to

function before putting their project before a market?

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Hon. Mr. O'Neil: I believe when my officials from the Ontario Development Corp. appeared before the committee they made things very clear as to where this company stood and as to the estimate of the value they placed on those different assets of Wyda. There is some difference of opinion as to what those assets are valued at. As I say, it was a court-appointed receiver and that was the decision made by the judge in this particular case.

Mr. Gillies: The minister really did not answer the question. His officials at ODC seem to have a rather hands-off attitude towards this company. Now we hear people who are involved in this kind of technology telling us they were minimum six months and maybe two years away from having anything.

Mr. Justice Catzman has approved the sale of this asset to a company called Value, which is headed by a Mr. Low, assisted by a Mr. Stern, both natives of Israel or having business interests there, neither of whom made any assurances to the judge or the minister's officials that any part of this technology would remain in Ontario.

What efforts did the minister and his officials put forward to try to ensure that this technology, developed at incredible cost by the Ontario taxpayers, has any hope whatsoever of remaining in this jurisdiction and not going the way of Mr. Dobzinski, back across the Atlantic?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The name of the company is Value Geometrix Ltd., just to give the complete name. As part of that decision made by the judge, I believe they were to complete and develop Wyda's technology within Ontario.

SUNDAY RACING

Ms. Bryden: I have a question to the Attorney General. Since the Supreme Court of Ontario has now ruled that the mandate of the Ontario Racing Commission does not require it to listen to the public affected by its decisions or to take its concerns into consideration in regulating race-tracks in Ontario, the ball is now back in the province's court. Only his government can stop Sunday racing at Greenwood, which is causing community chaos and cutting off access to other recreational facilities enjoyed by the whole city.

Is the Attorney General now prepared to urge his colleagues to give back to local residents their one weekend day of respite from racetrack problems by adopting my private member's bill to ban Sunday racing at Greenwood or by

bringing in his own legislation this spring session to protect the democratic rights of people affected by Ontario Racing Commission decisions?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, the subject matter of this question is a matter for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) who is not in the House. I will bring the member's concern to his attention. It will be no surprise to him to know of the member's interest.

In so far as the matter relates to a question of Sunday opening, that is a matter being considered by a committee of which the member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor) is the chairman, and we will no doubt have a report in the House on that subject very shortly.

Ms. Bryden: I understand the Attorney General recently met with representatives of Queen Street East residents' associations on the Sunday racing question and urged them to make a submission to the select committee on retail store hours. What does he now advise them to do since all the Liberal and Conservative members of that committee have rejected a motion from a New Democratic Party member to have the question of Sunday racing put on the agenda of that committee? The ball is back in his court. They wish to put on the agenda the mayor of Toronto's recommendation that the city be given the power to regulate the days and hours of racing. Is the minister prepared to bring in legislation to implement the mayor's suggestion if the committee cannot consider it?

Hon. Mr. Scott: The member is correct. Together with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, I met with the two aldermen for the area and a number of other ratepayers who are concerned about the problem. I made a suggestion to them to make a submission to the committee of this House that is dealing with this question under the chairmanship of the member for Oakville.

They were concerned about how to do that. I simply explained that I was sure he would receive one if they mailed it to him, that it did not have to be in any formal form and that if they were having any difficulty getting in touch with him or if there was any problem about the committee receiving their submission, I would be glad to hear from them again and intervene on their behalf.

If the ratepayers the honourable member speaks for in this context are having any difficulty, I would be delighted to hear from them

or from the member in order to facilitate their views being put in the proper way.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Sterling: My question is of the Minister of Education. In his recent capital funding announcement, the minister made special mention of the Carleton area as one of the four growing areas in this province. He made that statement last Wednesday. On Thursday, in spite of a held-out promise—as many of the people in the area feel it was—the minister gave \$2.9 million less to the public school board and \$10.4 million less to the separate school board. Even the Liberals in the area are blasting the minister and saying he made false promises, promises on which he did not deliver.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Sterling: Will the minister please straighten out the situation for the Liberals in the area and tell us whether or not he has misled the people of Ottawa-Carleton?

Hon. Mr. Conway: As my friend the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio) parenthetically observes, you cannot win them all. He is quite right.

It is also important for me to observe for my friend from Manotick that, perhaps at variance with past practices, we do not make capital allocations with a view to party preference.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies).

Hon. Mr. Conway: When I look at the allocations this government has provided to the Carleton school boards, I know they compare very favourably with the allocations my honourable friend's government was able to make in the period from 1980 to 1985. In fact, in 1987, we have announced capital allocations that are triple what the previous government was prepared to offer in 1985.

Mr. Sterling: We have heard about triple, we have heard about double and we have heard about all those things, but I want to show the minister this picture of a class at St. Bernard School and Blossom Park in the riding of the member for Carleton East (Mr. Morin), where the students have to have their classroom in a locker room with 350 kids. That school is going to have 600 kids by September, and in order to go to the washroom the kids have to put on their coats in the winter.

The minister said in his statement, "These needs and the needs of all students must be met."

Does he believe he is meeting the needs of the students at St. Bernard School and Blossom Park?

Hon. Mr. Conway: It is truly a brave new world when the member for Carleton-Grenville is the most vocal advocate for the separate school community in Carleton county.

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Mr. Sterling: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: I will listen, but I think you will be stretching it.

Mr. Sterling: I believe the minister has impugned my reputation. My reasons for standing on Bill 30 were clear to this Legislature. If the minister wants to make an allegation, make it straight—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. It is not a point of privilege.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I do not know what a point of privilege is. Clearly, the minister stood in his place and imputed motives against the member—

Mr. Speaker: Order, order. The minister, with a response.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I think it is important for me to say to the honourable member and to the school community in Carleton county that over the last number of years—in fact, within the last year—we made a number of supplementary allocations to the Carleton school boards. It is true that, when one looks at the April 1986 and April 1987 allocations, it is in part as the member suggests; but he must recall that, in response to a number of submissions made by the Carleton school community, I was able to provide supplementary allocations on at least two occasions in-year.

I am quite proud to say that, while we have not addressed all the school concerns in Carleton county, we have moved forward very significantly and I intend to do as much as I can to meet the needs there, as I will elsewhere.

PROVINCIAL PARKS

Mr. Wildman: I have a question for the Minister of Natural Resources. In view of the response of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) during the election campaign to the Project for Environmental Priorities questionnaire, in which he indicated yes, he supported prompt government action to put all 155 parks into regulation by the end of 1985, and in view of the fact that the minister has had over a year to decide on the final 51 proposed parks, can he explain why it has

taken so long and we still do not have a decision on parks such as Centennial Lake park near Pembroke, Fawn River park in the Sault Lookout area, Indian Point in the Lindsay area, Little Current River park in the Geraldton area and Misery Bay in the Espanola area?

When is this minister going to make a decision with regard to the last 51 parks; and can he explain what is taking him so long?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I certainly can explain what is taking so long, but I am not sure I can tell the member precisely when we are going to regulate the new parks. The fact of the matter is, when I inherited this ministry and there was an arrangement well under way for the parks to be used in a multiple purpose way, it seemed there had been achieved a consensus among the various users which seemed appropriate at the time, that the parks throughout Ontario could have multiple use and there had been achieved a consensus among the various users.

When the government changed, I suppose what really happened was that there were those who thought maybe they could have another kick at the cat, if you would like to describe it that way, and open the negotiations again. That is precisely what happened. There were those who had made agreements who wanted to have another look at it. That is where it is.

I think the public meetings we are having, the things we are doing to make certain the public now has input before we go forward with the regulating, is a reasonable way to assess the whole circumstance and that is where it is at. It is being done and I am sure it will be done to the satisfaction of the member who raises the question, because we are making concessions now to make sure we get the regulations in place.

Mr. Wildman: Will the minister not agree that there was no such attempt to have what he calls a "second kick at the cat," but that in fact this minister himself cannot get a consensus within his own government, much less within his own ministry? Can he explain to us what his position is and what the position of the government is with respect to multiple use within the parks; and can he make a commitment that he can give us a date as to when that decision will be made and the other 51 parks will be designated?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I certainly can give the member a commitment. The commitment of this government and this minister is to set aside parks throughout Ontario for all people to enjoy in their leisure time. It is not as easy as he now chooses to make it. The fact of the matter is that there are many people with more leisure time and there is a

great difference of how people want to spend that leisure time. We are attempting to address all the problems, and I am sure he is going to be very pleased when we do.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

CHILD CARE

Mr. Baetz: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. In view of the minister's continued waffling on the issue of the private day care operators' future role in the child care field, can the minister today, especially now in the light of the Meech Lake accord, tell us without further equivocation whether he believes the private operators do have have an appropriate, legitimate, long-term role in the child care field worthy of some government support?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Yes.

Mr. Baetz: It is a breakthrough, yes. That is the Meech Lake accord, is it?

In view of the fact we have now heard the minister's promise, without equivocation, that the private operators are going to be getting long-term government support, is the minister now going to be equally expeditious in trying to settle a lot of the demoralization that has occurred in the private day care field because of his long-term waffling and equivocation?

As the minister probably knows, there is a lot of low morale. Is he now going to go out there, and what is he going to do to correct that morale? Let him tell us.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Given the fact that we have done more in 22 months than the member's government did in 22 years, I think the term "without equivocation" is maybe not the right one to use.

I have said very clearly that we intend to continue to support the private sector in day care in this province, but the member obviously knows that we are currently negotiating with the federal government—negotiations that I expect to be concluded in June—which clearly is going to indicate the degree to which we are going to get its support for what we do. We said we are going to move anyway. The degree of support is the only point that is at stake.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: My question is to the Premier. I know he has got involved recently in the auto insurance issue, to try to get his minister to cut the losses, so today I would like to ask him a

question relating to the case of Paula Culling who is in the gallery here today. Coming from British Columbia recently, she had a perfect driving record there for eight years, except for a minor \$223 claim in 1984. The public insurance plan there paid the claim without penalty and her safe driving record was not violated.

Does the Premier think it is reasonable that because of that three-year-old claim in British Columbia, she must now, in Ontario, pay \$420 yearly over and above the normal rate she pays here, which is higher in any event? As head of the government here for almost two years, how can the Premier condone that kind of ongoing ripoff by the private insurance companies in this province?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The honourable minister asked me to convey his regrets to the member that he could not be here to discuss the matter with him today. I know how much he enjoys the member's questions in this House.

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I am operating on the principle now, and I am being charitable, that the member's facts are accurate. I do not have a response to that particular case, but let me say to the member, and through him to his visitor in the gallery, that I would be very happy to introduce her to the minister upon his return. I welcome her to Ontario, by the way, and say, "I hope you enjoy it here very much." Perhaps we can sort out the problem, but I cannot comment on the specifics.

Mr. Swart: The Premier realizes, of course, there is nothing in legislation here to solve that problem. If he is sincere about protecting motorists against the insurance companies, why has he not proclaimed section 371 of the Insurance Act, which could immediately stop these blatant injustices that he seems now to have found out do exist? Why has his government, during the two years of the insurance crisis, refused even to investigate the benefits of a public plan like the ones in BC, Manitoba and Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am just praying for mercy here and I am going to insist that the minister is here every day from now on so that I can avoid this kind of personal abuse in the House.

I guess I understand the honourable member's point of view with respect to the state ownership of almost everything and I respect that it is a difference. We have discussed in the past some of the differences in the driving complexion of the various provinces, and I understand that as

well, but I think the minister has proceeded on an excellent course that will cure some of the excesses in the system and still guarantee competition in the marketplace. I am sure even the honourable member opposite will feel that the people of this province will be extremely well served by the creative leadership of the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter).

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD

Mr. Brandt: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. The Minister of Labour is aware that both our party and the third party have called for a royal commission into the affairs and the way in which the operations of the Workers' Compensation Board are being undertaken at the present time. Would the minister indicate what his response is to the request of both parties in connection with that matter?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am not actually sure I have seen anything that has been received in terms of a joint resolution or a joint proposal from the two parties, but I want to share with the House and with my honourable friend a concern that I have and that I believe both the business community and, indeed, the trade union movement have, in that a lot of reforms are now ongoing at the WCB.

There has been a board of directors in place for about a year and a half. Significant regionalization of the board's adjudication and pension services are under way. Regionalization proposals are now under way in the medical services field as well. As the member knows, there is now a report proposing significant changes in the current Downsview hospital and rehabilitation centre.

I think that rather than put all the reforms on hold—and there are many reforms which will aid both injured workers and the business community—with yet another royal commission—and there have been six or seven—the WCB should be allowed to complete the job and see that those reforms, we hope, will begin to solve some of the problems and some of the concerns that both sides, and indeed, members of the Legislature, have had over the years.

Mr. Brandt: The minister should be aware that the reforms he speaks of will not necessarily have to be put on hold during the time the royal commission is undertaking its review of the situation.

The minister is also aware that there are some very critical problems going on at the present time with respect to the Workers' Compensation Board, among which are: an unfunded liability

which is quickly reaching the point of some \$6 billion; the bureaucracy is growing very rapidly; there are many employers and employees in this province who are simply unable to understand the system any more, the costs of which are going completely out of control.

Would the minister indicate what kind of a response he is prepared to give with respect to these kinds of immediate problems? Anything he has suggested will not address the very fundamental problems with respect to the structuring of the WCB.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: There are some very significant structural changes under way, but I think the concern the honourable member raises is a concern about the unfunded liability. The honourable gentleman is on the standing committee on resources development. I believe he has heard in the past, and if not I can inform him today, that over the past three years there have been a number of proposed rate increases that will begin the process of bringing the unfunded liability under control.

The significant aspect is that in the 1987 rate year it was not necessary to pass on to the business community the full 15 per cent that the WCB had allowed. The maximum increase passed on was 14 per cent. I know the member would want his business community to know that there were some 16 or 17 rate groups that actually had rate decreases. Thus, the average increase this year was only 8.7 per cent. We hope we can do much better, but the honourable gentleman will know that it is the rate groups producing much improved accident statistics that are receiving the decreases in their assessments.

SEWAGE TREATMENT

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Premier. In the throne speech, we heard of enriched support for upgrading municipal sewer and water systems. A recent report has estimated it would take \$140 million a year to maintain and rehabilitate the water distribution system alone. Can the Premier tell us how much enhanced support means and how quickly his government is prepared to restore the sewer and water systems of our municipalities?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not in a position to respond specifically to the question today. As the honourable member knows, it is a budgetary matter that the minister will be talking about in some detail in the future.

Mr. McClellan: Why does he not bring in his budget?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The House leader has a wonderful suggestion. Why do we not bring in the budget? That is an excellent suggestion. The members of that party have been spending 95 per cent of their intellectual energy in the last little while trying to avoid the budget. We will be happy to share it with them. Until that time, I am not in a position to give specific figures.

I think they saw a minister who understands those problems intimately and is in the process of attempting to address them. We have a serious problem with infrastructure in the province. We are in the process of rebuilding schools, environmental and pollution control equipment, roads and other things. We cannot undo 42 years of neglect in one day but we are making great progress.

Mrs. Grier: If the Premier will not answer budgetary questions, perhaps he can answer a policy question. The minister has had two years to deal with this, but he is obviously not prepared to.

I am sure the Premier understands that industrial discharges to the sanitary sewer systems are a major contributor to their deterioration. We have called upon the minister on innumerable occasions to close the major loophole in his municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program that allows almost 12,000 industries to discharge into our sanitary sewer systems. Can the Premier tell us whether it is the government's policy—and if not, why not?—to regulate these industrial discharges at source so that the government will not have to spend money just to rehabilitate systems but can also prevent their future deterioration?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I said, the minister will have more to say in the future on his plans in this regard. I am sure the member opposite, because she is very fair-minded and knowledgeable on these issues, will recognize that our Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) is taking a leading role in North America with respect to industrial waste and airborne and other forms of pollution. I am sure, when the member sees what he has done, she will want to stand up in her place and celebrate the leadership of this minister.

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HIGH WATER LEVELS

Mr. Brandt: To my friend the Minister of Natural Resources: I would like to ask a question with respect to the problem of high water in the Great Lakes communities. The minister is well aware that the recent high water levels have

caused a great deal of devastation amounting to millions of dollars in many of the communities around the Great Lakes basin. Is the minister aware of the federal disaster financial assistance program with which the federal government is prepared to provide up to 90 per cent financing, to enable both municipalities and private property owners to undertake necessary adjustments and make necessary renovations to their property to provide them with the protection they require from high-water problems? Is the minister aware of the program and is he prepared to make submissions to the federal government so that our province can qualify for some of that money?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Yes, I am very much aware of the federal program. It is rather a disappointment that it is a disaster program, that a disaster has to be declared before any of that money can be brought into place. The fact of the matter is—

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: If the members will be quiet for a few minutes, they will understand that I am going to answer the question.

The fact is that the disaster fund is precisely what they say it is and until a disaster is declared no money is going to flow from the federal government. Believe me, we have been trying diligently for a good long time to get the federal government to face up to the responsibility of 3,000 miles of shoreline in Ontario alone.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: No, it is not. The member knows precisely what it is.

They are just not doing what needs to be done with the American federal government, and that is to address themselves to the problem. This government has taken into account the things it can do to help, with the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) and with more money put into the help we can give provincially. It really is a matter for the federal governments and the two nations that share the largest fresh water system in the world to address the problem. We are fully prepared to respond and be helpful to the degree that we can, as are municipalities and individuals, but this really is a responsibility that should be initiated by the federal government. That disaster money is not available unless a disaster is declared and I think that is not fair.

Mr. Brandt: Some of the members opposite talk about 40 years of neglect. With respect to this program, I want to tell the members about two years of absolute unequivocal neglect on the minister's part. He has done nothing about this program. In the past two years, the high-water

problems in this province have reached critical levels. Upon receipt of requests from municipalities declaring a disaster, if they declare a disaster in their area with respect to high water, is the minister prepared to carry that request to the federal government for the allocation of funds that are set out under the terms of this program? The minister should not pass the buck to the federal government or to some other level of government. Is the minister prepared to carry the request and fund the difference that is required to qualify our province for that money?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I am not passing the buck; the buck was there in the first place. The fact is that it is an international problem and it is of proportions that a provincial government and municipalities cannot handle. Certainly, I am prepared to bring forward any submission to the federal government. Up to this point, they have not responded. We are looking and anxious. We have put in place a group of people that has had public input from from one end of the lake system to the other. We now have put in a permanent group of advisers that is going to bring the kind of direction that a provincial government can to people who are affected. If there are those who bring forward disaster relief requests to the provincial government, certainly those requests will be forwarded to the federal government. However, the honourable member should remember that in every instance there has to be \$9 million worth of damage before the federal government will participate, and that is the key. In each event or in each specific place—

Mr. Harris: Are you telling the people there has not been \$9 million worth of damage? The last storm there was—

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The member is not talking specifics. The fact of the matter is that it is the high water that is causing it and the federal government is going to have to play a role.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. The Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety obviously agrees with the trade union movement, the Provincial Auditor and the Ontario Law Reform Commission that the McKenzie-Laskin report was a whitewash. Let me quote one sentence. "However, council believes that in addition and in light of the almost 10 years of experience gained since the enactment, a more thorough and comprehensive review and examination of the act and the administration"—I thought we just went through that—"thereof is needed."

In this most blistering condemnation of the minister's performance, does he intend to follow its advice or continue to ignore it as he has since he became minister?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I do not think that the advice of the council, which is very valuable advice, always ought to be followed, or indeed always ought to be ignored. The council's advice is looked upon very carefully in each and every memorandum that it sends me. I know the honourable member wants to make a great deal about this latest memorandum. Frankly, we will take a look at the advice it offers.

Mr. Martel: If I had a memorandum such as that and I were minister I would probably resign.

The Advisory Council on Occupational Health and Occupational Safety roasted the minister in the report. Last week, he refused to deal with the content of that report in any of the questions asked of him. I reviewed the questions again to see whether he had. Is he prepared to tell us today in the House whether he disagrees with its content and who besides him as Minister of Labour and McKenzie and Laskin think things are going well in this province with respect to occupational health and safety?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: It is fair to suggest that there is widely viewed to have been a great improvement in the administration of the Occupational Health and Safety Act in the past two years. That view is widely shared. There is a greater understanding among the business community, among the trade union movement and indeed among all workers in this province today than there was two years ago of the need to ensure and to work at all times towards healthier and safer work places.

It has been some time since the upward trend in lost-time accidents and in occupational health problems has been arrested. In the first three months of this year, there has been at least a very modest decline, not the kind I would hope for. In the months to come, with the kinds of direction that now are beginning to appear and with a better working of the internal responsibility system that has begun to appear in the past year or so in many plants and factories in Ontario, I hope that process will be accelerated.

SPECIAL GRAINS PROGRAM

Mr. Stevenson: I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. In spite of requests by Ontario producer groups, the minister did not contribute to the special grains program for this year. We know that federal-provincial meetings now are under way studying a proposal for this

year's crop. To what percentage does the minister plan to enrich the program for this year?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I will be prepared to answer that after the staff from the federal government and from the provincial government meet to decide just where we go from here. I assure the honourable member that whatever we do will be effective, equitable and market neutral.

Mr. Ashe: On a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think I have received notice of that.

Mr. Ashe: You have it right now, Mr. Speaker. If you will indulge me for one moment, I feel that my privileges as a member of this Legislature have been abrogated and I suggest that all members should be particularly concerned on this issue.

Last week, a day or two following the speech from the throne, meat on the bones, if you will, to do with the education transfers was given out; the numbers were given out. The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), the member for Middlesex (Mr. Reycraft), came out to Durham region, not to my constituency and made—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ashe: Mr. Speaker, this is a matter of privilege. How can you tell it is not if you do not hear me out?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understand the point. The member is stating that some of this information was given in his constituency not by himself or not by the member of the constituency.

Mr. Ashe: No, that is not the point.

Mr. Speaker: What is your point of privilege?
1520

Mr. Ashe: My point of privilege is this: we all agree that we should at least be aware of information to do with government programs at the same time as other members. That is a privilege we all should have. What happened in this, and I presume in other situations, is that the member, on behalf of the minister, had a press conference to which selected members of the press were invited but to which duly elected members were not invited. Believe it or not, Mr. Speaker, the duly elected school boards that were affected were not invited, yet the local nominated Liberal candidate was.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat? I listened very carefully

and it is not a point of privilege. I advise the member that he will have ample time to put that type of information when we are on the throne speech. He may also put that type of information before the House during members' statements, if he so desires, but it is not a point of privilege.

PETITIONS

LOW-ALCOHOL PRODUCTS

Mr. McFadden: I have a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"As parents and teachers of students attending John Wanless Junior School, we wish to state our concern over products such as Sarasoda and Caesars' Shandy which are sold in local stores. We are not happy that our children can purchase a product which masquerades as a soft drink but which contains 0.9 per cent alcohol. This type of product should not be available to minors."

This petition is signed by 55 concerned parents and teachers associated with John Wanless Public School.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I wish to table a petition that reads:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

It is signed by 172 persons now, bringing the total to 958, with many more to come.

PROPERTY TAX GRANT

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I wish to table a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Honourable Robert Nixon, Treasurer of Ontario, and to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"The Ontario property tax grant, which was first issued in 1979 at \$500, or 20 per cent of a person's gross rent, has never been changed. The average yearly increase in the rate of inflation has been 7.63 per cent. Therefore, it is our request that the Treasurer of Ontario revise the property tax grant to reflect the increases in the cost of living over the last eight years."

It is signed by several hundred residents.

SUNDAY RACING

Ms. Bryden: I wish to table a petition about Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track. It is signed by 19 residents who live close to the track and is the same as petitions presented last session by almost 700 other residents. It reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas the Ontario Racing Commission in its hearings into the Ontario Jockey Club application for Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track has ruled that it does not have the jurisdiction to hear the concerns of residents surrounding the aforesaid racetrack;

"And whereas many residents have shown their concern with the impact of Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track on their neighbourhood and have indicated their wish to voice that concern;

"That the government amend the Racing Commission Act to ensure that the rights and concerns of residents in the neighbourhood of the racetrack and in the surrounding community be considered and protected by the Ontario Racing Commission in setting racing dates, times and schedules;

"Further, that the legislation provide that the long tradition of no Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track be maintained."

I support this petition.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

INTERNATIONAL COMMERCIAL ARBITRATION ACT LOI DE 1987 SUR L'ARBITRAGE COMMERCIAL INTERNATIONAL

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 17, An Act to implement the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration adopted by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law.

L'hon. M. Scott propose la première lecture du projet de loi 17, Loi concernant la mise en application de la Loi type sur l'arbitrage commercial international adoptée par la Commission des Nations Unies pour le droit commercial international.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Scott: It is another one.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We are adjusting the model law.

Hon. Mr. Scott: This is the same bill that was introduced in the last session.

METROPOLITAN TORONTO POLICE FORCE COMPLAINTS ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 18, An Act to amend the Metropolitan Toronto Police Force Complaints Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The bill is a replication of the bill that was introduced in the last session.

DISTRICT OF MUNICIPALITY OF MUSKOKA AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 19, An Act to amend the District Municipality of Muskoka Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: This bill was previously introduced.

MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved first reading of Bill 20, An Act to amend the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto Act.

Motion agreed to.

GREENWOOD RACEWAY ACT

Ms. Bryden moved first reading of Bill 22, An Act respecting the Operation of the Greenwood Raceway and the Composition of the Ontario Racing Commission.

Motion agreed to.

Ms. Bryden: This bill is identical to Bill 175 that I introduced last session on December 11, 1986. Its objective is to ban Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track and to protect the democratic rights of residents affected by race-track activities. It also changes the composition of the Ontario Racing Commission to include representatives of the general public living in the vicinity of racetracks.

1530

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 2:

That the membership on the standing and select committees of the House for the third session of the 33rd Parliament be as follows:

Select committee on the environment: Messrs. Charlton, Eves, Gillies, Mrs. Grier, Messrs.

Henderson, Knight, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. G. I. Miller, Partington, D. W. Smith and South.

Select committee on health: Messrs. Andrewes, Baetz, Callahan, D. S. Cooke, Cordiano, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Henderson, R. F. Johnston, Reycraft, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Turner.

Select committee on retail store hours: Messrs. Barlow, Bernier, Guindon, O'Connor, Philip, Polsinelli, Reville, Sargent, Shymko, D. W. Smith and Ms. E. J. Smith.

Standing committee on administration of justice: Messrs. Brandt, Charlton, D. R. Cooke, Ms. Fish, Ms. Gigantes, Messrs. O'Connor, Partington, Poirier, Polsinelli, Rowe and Ward.

Standing committee on finance and economic affairs: Messrs. Ashe, D. R. Cooke, Cordiano, Ferraro, Haggerty, McFadden, Mackenzie, Morin-Strom, Ramsay, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Taylor.

Standing committee on general government: Mrs. Grier, Messrs. Guindon, Lane, Lupusella, McCague, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Offer, Pollock, Sheppard and Swart.

Standing committee on government agencies: Messrs. Fontaine, Foulds, Gregory, Hayes, J. M. Johnson, Leluk, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. Mitchell, Polsinelli, Sargent and D. W. Smith.

Standing committee on the Legislative Assembly: Messrs. Bossy, Breaugh, Mancini, Martel, Morin, Newman, Sterling, Treleaven, Turner, Villeneuve and Warner.

Standing committee on the Ombudsman: Messrs. Bossy, Hayes, Henderson, Hennessy, Mancini, McLean, McNeil, Morin, Philip, Sheppard and Shymko.

Standing committee on public accounts: Messrs. Barlow, Callahan, Cousens, Epp, Gillies, Mancini, Philip, Pope, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Wildman.

Standing committee on regulations and private bills: Ms. Bryden, Messrs. Callahan, Dean, Haggerty, Hennessy, Lupusella, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Pouliot, Shymko and Wiseman.

Standing committee on resources development: Mr. Bernier, Ms. Caplan, Messrs. Gordon, Laughren, McGuigan, Offer, Pierce, Reville, South, Stevenson and Wildman.

Standing committee on social development: Messrs. Allen, Andrewes, Baetz, Callahan, Cordiano, Davis, Grande, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Jackson, R. F. Johnston and Reycraft.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 3:

That the following standing and select committees be authorized to meet as follows:

Select committee on the environment in the morning of and following routine proceedings on May 6, 1987.

Select committee on health following routine proceedings on May 4 and 5, 1987.

Select committee on retail store hours following routine proceedings on May 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12, 1987.

Standing committee on finance and economic affairs following routine proceedings on May 11, 12, 13 and 14, 1987.

Standing committee on the Legislative Assembly in the morning of May 13, 1987.

Standing committee on resources development following routine proceedings on May 13 and 14, 1987.

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the motion be amended by adding to the end thereof:

"Standing committee on the Ombudsman in the morning of May 6, 1987."

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr. Grossman: I want to begin by congratulating the mover and seconder of the speech from the throne on their comments, however brief, last week. I regret their absence from the House today, as I wished to have the opportunity to congratulate them on the honour that was bestowed upon them.

I am also pleased to have the opportunity to rise today in response to the speech from the throne itself. My colleagues and I had awaited His Honour's address with great anticipation because it offered us and all Ontarians our first real look at the Liberal Party of Ontario. After all, it was our first chance to get a good glimpse of Liberal economic and social policies; to have a look at that alone, without any encumbrance or help.

Last year's throne speech, co-authored as it was in a way by the New Democratic Party, cannot be said to have revealed much of the true nature of the thoughts of the government of Ontario. I say to those members present across the way that their government was an infant government then, rocked in the cradle of the New Democratic Party, with an accord for swaddling clothes and newness for a blanket. No one

expected vision from the government in those early days. No one expected a bold plan of its own for the future.

Indeed, on only one occasion in last year's throne speech did the government have the courage or the vision—let us call it vision for the moment—to set forward something in the high-technology area. This was the late, belated \$1-billion high-technology fund. Twelve months later, we know where that single bold Liberal step in the first throne speech ended. The government managed to spend three per cent—imagine, three per cent—of the announced annual spending on the high-technology fund.

Today it stands as an embarrassment, and I do not mean only to the Premier (Mr. Peterson). To his credit, he even allowed his Premier's Council, the now red-faced high-tech club, which has wasted thousands of dollars presiding over literally nothing, to put in a repeat performance, no less, in this year's throne speech. After all, the Premier's Council had such a sparkling record last year that the Premier was eager to bring it back to lead us for a second year into the bold high-tech world of the future.

I remind the members that this is the group that was given \$100 million last year to spend on high technology, the group that managed to spend all of \$800,000 on high technology and the group that caused one of the ministers of the crown to stand in his place a couple of weeks ago and say, if you can believe it, that it had trouble finding places to invest the money in high technology in Ontario. This is the futuristic group that the Premier thought ought to guide us into year two of the Liberal view of high technology.

Let us look at what the fund did—you recall it, Mr. Speaker—a \$1-billion high-technology fund; \$100 million a year. In point of fact, after two or three days of reading the leaked headlines and every single leaked detail in the favourite newspaper of announcement of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter), the Toronto Star, it was acknowledged somewhat red-facedly by the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) that this was not really \$1 billion, but was \$100 million for 10 years.

He acknowledged later on that it was not a new \$100 million. They would not want to invest \$100 million a year in high technology. No, it was a new \$50 million. That was the extent of their commitment. It was not the \$1 billion they leaked into a headline in the Star; it was not the big, bold new step forward. It was a new \$50 million a year for high technology.

Now we see not only that they did not spend 10 cents of the \$50 million new money, but also that they spent only \$3 million—stretching it, I might add. They allege they spent \$3 million of the old money the previous government was putting into high technology on an annual basis. Net result: the Premier's high-technology council, his advisory council on our future, reduced the spending on high technology by \$47 million, and it admitted at the end of the year it could find no places to invest the money.

Mr. Speaker, you will have to forgive my colleagues and me if we say we have awaited this throne speech with some reservations. The carefully orchestrated media leaks prior to last Tuesday's throne speech touched, I will say, on some areas of real significance. Indeed, if last year the approach of that government was to preannounce the throne speech in the favourite newspaper of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, we thought this year the approach was to allow the *Toronto Star* to plough the furrow.

I am delighted that the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), unlike any of the other three members of the A team, has chosen to be with us today, because it was mainly in the area of education that we thought the *Toronto Star* had ploughed the furrow.

What happened? We find, of course, that the commitment to high technology has disappeared. We find there is no promise to spend even the \$50 million of old money that the previous government was spending on high technology. Indeed rather than one, two or three specific areas of vision that any government ought to have after two years in office, we saw just a panoply of requests and a wish list.

Someone said to me last week that this was not a plan for government, but a job description. It was simply a job description of what the government was supposed to have been doing for the past two years. Nowhere in there was there was a plan as to how to do it. The throne speech itself is riddled with words such as "we hope to," "we will have a pilot project," "we will offer more money to" and "we will expand." Those are the kinds of words we got.

In fact, I know what happened. Some time during the last couple of months, there was obviously a decision taken that as the normal course of throne speeches unfolds, a letter would be sent out to all ministries asking them for their wish lists. That is the way the system works. With respect, the system has always worked that

way, for longer back than 42 years. I think Mitch Hepburn started the system.

One writes to all the ministries saying, "Tell me the things you would like to do," and all the ministries traditionally write in, having prioritized what they would like to do and the things they would request. One would have hoped that when it got to the A team, when it got to the four horsemen on the front benches there, that they would have gathered somewhere and decided to prioritize those requests.

One would have thought the Treasurer of Ontario might have said, "Listen, Premier, you have this much money to spend." One would have thought he might have said to the Premier, "Listen, if you do not want the highest level of taxes in the land, you have only this much money." One would have thought the Treasurer might have said: "Premier, we have a deficit which we have chosen not to attack during this era of prosperity. If you want to make a significant attack on it, then you could better reduce the deficit by this amount of money and that will leave you \$X million to go."

It is quite clear that none of that happened. It is quite clear that a decision was taken by the four horsemen on the front row, the A team and Hershell Ezrin, our representative-designate in India, to do none of that. The decision was taken: "Let us just get every hare-brained fond wish of every bureaucrat, every civil servant, every minister and, yes, even René Fontaine"—that is the degree to which they went—"lay it all on a list, and we will put it all in the throne speech. Let us not be selective."

1540

Mr. Jackson: We cannot afford René's list.

Mr. Grossman: We cannot even afford his travel expenses. How can we afford his list? The only difference between his travel expenses and the wish list is that you actually have to pay for his expenses. The wish list you never have to pay for because there is no government in the land that could afford to meet all these promises, so it is simply a list.

It was simply the Premier saying to every one of the 80,000 civil servants and every one of the 20 ministers masquerading as four ministers: "Tell us everything you would like to do every day of the week. Do not give us a focus, do not give us a theme, do not give us a strategy; just tell us everything you would like to do."

There is the Minister of Education who holds up the words "July 4, 1985."

An hon. member: June 4, 1985.

Mr. Grossman: June 4, 1985, by which he means to say, "Remember the realities of June 4, 1985." I say to the minister, "We remember what happened on June 4, 1985." What happened was a party that has yet to be elected by the people of this province was put in office by a party which had 25 seats out of 125 in this House. I say to the minister, "Do not let the realities of June 4 do for you what the realities of March 19 did for your predecessors." It did them in and it is going to do the minister in.

Let us get on to the wish list. Let us look at last year for a second. I wish the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) could have been with us today. He is no doubt doing press clippings in the London Free Press or he is meeting with Chuck Yeager. There was a commitment in last year's throne speech to establish a modern food quality lab. If the minister were with us today in body or in mind, I would say to him it is a great idea. Actually, it was my idea. It was quite clear and direct in my first leadership campaign. He borrowed it for last year's throne speech, which made me happy. Only a small problem developed; they did nothing about it. It died in last year's throne speech.

Do members remember last year's promise of a world-class—where have I heard that word before?

I failed to bring in with me the Premier's explanation of what world-class means. I hope my staff are somewhere in the building—I know they are—if they find that for me, I do not want to miss this opportunity to read into the record the Premier's vision of what world-class means. In any event, it is his favourite word. Last year it was a world-class pesticides lab. I have not seen a bit of it since last year's throne speech.

How about the chair of science and entrepreneurship? Have we seen that? Have we seen the northern Ontario high school of science and technology? I want to ask my colleague the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) if we have seen a world-class or Peterson-class northern Ontario high school of science and technology.

Mr. Pope: We have seen a world-class mess.

Mr. Grossman: Of course, we have not. It would have been named after that world-class expert René Fontaine if we had had it, and we have not seen that opening. No, we have not seen anything approaching the northern Ontario high school of science and technology.

I should also like to ask the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, otherwise the

Premier, what happened, indeed, not only to the northern Ontario high school of science and technology but also to the northern Ontario hydro advisory board. Could they not find seven Liberals left in northern Ontario who were not already on the so-called economic development committee? Could they not find seven Liberals, or seven New Democrats, to serve on the northern Ontario hydro advisory board?

Mr. Gillies: I could think of two.

Mr. Grossman: Yes, but on grounds of good taste alone, they would have declined.

Instead of appointing the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) to what they are going to appoint him to, they should appoint him to the northern Ontario hydro advisory board. We will support that appointment, just so long as we finally get what they promised a year ago for northern Ontario. We are not surprised to find that they were not able to put together the northern Ontario high school of science and technology, or the world-class pesticides lab or the hydro advisory board because they were not even able to deliver on the much-talked-about, boasted-about toilets on Highway 401. The cornerstone, the core, the essence, the substance of last year's throne speech was, of course, the world-class washroom facilities along the 401 that they so boasted of last year.

Mr. Epp: We know where you are going now, Larry.

Mr. Grossman: Wherever I am going, like the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp), I am not going into the Liberal cabinet.

Now here it is. My staff has delivered to me the Premier's definition of "world-class." I want the members to listen to this. "It is a question of putting the right ingredients together, creating the critical mass for cross-fertilization." There it is. I am going to keep this here. I do not want to forget it. My children are hoping I will bring it home.

I want to say one word about those washrooms on the 401, because as always, it is the little things that tell you a lot about how serious a government is about doing anything. The Premier was asked at the press conference last week what happened to the washrooms on the 401 and he said, with a straight face, mind you—the member for Waterloo North should think about this as he drives home tonight—"Washrooms take a long time." Honest, he said that; I am serious. He said they take a long time.

He also told the press conference last week—his advice to the member for Waterloo North as he drives home tonight along the 401—"Take an

air-sickness bag with you in the meantime." That is what the Premier of Ontario said about that key part of his throne speech last year.

That kind of leadership carried right on to this year's throne speech. Let me talk about how we intend to measure this government. The Premier's words, and I want to use his words, were, "We will be judged on our record." He said: "We are now a mature government. The so-called afterglow is all gone." I want to judge them as a mature government with no apologies and none of the words that worked in the first six or eight months about: "We are just new people on the block. We are going to make lots of mistakes."

The Premier has put that behind him. He has said that they are going to be judged on their record and that they now are a mature government. As such, the taxpaying public had reason to hope that last Tuesday's throne speech would indicate we had seen the end of the government's infatuation with the shallow, with the trendy and with tinkering. But no, the throne speech was an intrusive grab-bag.

The Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) is going to find the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) to give him tomorrow's questions.

Instead of getting a direction, we got a grab-bag. There was no purpose, or sense of vision or direction, found in last week's throne speech. Indeed, someone said to me that last week's throne speech does for platitudes what Don Smith did for patronage and budget control at the dome. It does perhaps for the future what the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) has done for judicial independence. It does for the taxpayer what the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) did for race relations. It does for our industrial base what the Premier's trip to Washington did for Ontario's steel industry. In other words, it speaks simply to every loose, half-baked idea cooked up by image-makers and bureaucrats who have been looking for someone finally to print some long-forgotten idea, but it speaks to little that matters in the real Ontario.

1550

I say it is a self-satisfied string of reruns, policies revisited, problems restudied, programs refurbished and promises repeated—nothing new. The priorities in this government's agenda read like a job description in the help wanted ads. It is a statement of the obvious, a duty list, the minimum requirements for government.

I say to the Minister of Education, the government is supposed to seek excellence in education. The government is supposed to

enhance trade opportunities. It is the proper role of government to renew our transportation infrastructure.

I suppose it is somewhat reassuring to find out that after two years the government has finally recognized its obligations, but I thought for a second the people of Ontario wanted to know how the government was going to meet those obligations, what its plan was, what its program was, not that it finally figured out that its job is to seek excellence in education.

The question is how. In education, the government announced its intention to reduce our school drop-out rate; a laudable goal, one I suspect every government in the western world shares. The people were wondering just how this government is going to address this well-documented problem. The "how" in the throne speech? The answer is "a study." So the government can figure out how to keep its promise of reducing the drop-out rate by one third in five years, it is going to have a study.

I say to the minister, what about the other two thirds? What about the remaining 160,000 students who drop out of school? For them, the throne speech has a brilliant answer. They are going "to foster a desire to stay in school." That is the plan: to foster a desire to stay in school. For 160,000 students, whom they write off because their target was to reduce it to only 22 per cent, not to eliminate it, they say they are going "to foster a desire to stay in school." That is really terrific.

What is the minister doing about it? Where is the plan to keep them in school, and above and beyond that, where is the driving force that made the minister want to serve in government?

I would have thought that someone with the background of the Minister of Education would have been the kind of zealot, would have been the kind of hard worker who said to his Premier, "Premier, during my term as Minister of Education, before I go to hell, I want to reduce the drop-out rate to zero." I would have thought this Minister of Education would have said the 22 per cent drop-out rate is intolerable and too high. I would have thought this Minister of Education would have said, "The drop-out rate has to go to zero in five years, not down to 22 per cent in five years."

In this case, not only is their strategy missing but also their goal is totally inadequate. I say to the minister that it is not good enough in Ontario in 1987 to say that he hopes over five years to achieve a state where 22 per cent of our young

people still drop out of school without completing grade 12.

They have set their goals low. They have set their sights low. They show all the signs of a government that has been overtaken by its bureaucracy after only two years.

The Minister of Education went on, of course. He talked about the need for new capital funding. When we get by the grand announcement, the minister is intending to add 37,000 school spaces across the province. There are more students than that in portables in York and Peel regions alone. If all those 37,000 school spaces were devoted today to York and Peel regions, it still would not solve the problem in York and Peel, let alone the rest of the province, and there are 166 other school boards yet to consider.

It is consistent with the government's strategy: Just give a little bit more so that you can make an announcement that you have taken a step, but do not come close to solving the problem.

Then, of course, there was the much-talked-about focus on literacy and numeracy achievement among elementary students, yet one would look at the throne speech and say, "What are they going to do about it?"

What are they going to do? Are they going to roll up their shirtsleeves and get down to work on dealing with literacy and numeracy in our elementary schools? I will tell the members how they are going to roll up their sleeves. Are the members ready for this? They are going to have demonstration learning skills projects in selected schools. That is what they are going to do.

They are not going to say, "We have an urgent problem here." They are not going to say, "We have a generation of young people in our elementary schools who are going to be totally left behind the Japanese, the Germans and now the Koreans in the new high-technology world." They are not about to say that. They are going to say, "Because of this major challenge, we think we will have some demonstration learning skills projects in selected schools."

It is for that reason that I indict the members of this government. They have a chance today to be more than shoppers. They have a chance to be investors. They have a chance to invest in those young people, but not with a token that can be dropped in a throne speech as they say, "Here, I have done something," because the minister has not done anything. He should not try to kid himself or the public. He has not done anything for skills, numeracy, mathematics or science and technology in our schools when he has a demonstration learning skills project.

I bet that is exactly what the Japanese are doing today. I guess they are out there having demonstration learning skills projects in selected schools. I think they are not. I think they are about the task, and I think they have been for some years.

We got that ridiculous statement last week that talked about this new testing program in Ontario, which turns out to be an information-gathering program costing \$500,000 a year. Obviously, the minister did not have any desire to do anything more than address the cosmetics. It is \$500,000 a year, not to put in province-wide assessments, not to put in province-wide testing, not to come to grips with science and technology and mathematics, but instead to gather information from students and teachers throughout the system. Just so that we know their commitment to dealing with this problem right off the top, they are not going to deal with mathematics in grades 11 and 12 until 1992.

Why does the minister bother? Why go through this charade? Why did he let the Premier embarrass him by handing him this piece of paper and telling him to stand up and pretend that he is doing something, as the throne speech says, to deal with skills, mathematics, science and technology by having information gathering in 1992 from grade 11 mathematics students. If it were not such a tragic circumstance, it would be a laugh. That is this government's commitment to the future.

I want to move on past what is clearly in the first 10 or 11 pages of the throne speech a twinkle at, a nod at, a simple wink at the education problems our people face and say that the minister has just totally failed in all those areas. We stand here with this Liberal throne speech, two years into the Liberals' time in office, and should ask, "What has this government done in the education area in the two years during which it has had the chance?"

Should we test students in mathematics in grade 11 five years from today? Should we not offer enough new classrooms across the province to eliminate the portables in the regional municipalities of Peel and Durham and York? Is that the Liberals' contribution?

The single thing that they talk about is having passed Bill 30 which, on his fair days, even the minister will acknowledge would have been passed under any government, given the co-operation received from all sides of the House. Why is the minister occupying that chair? Of all the ministers over there, we thought he might bring a sense of direction and vision, but instead

one believes the Treasurer, who is no fan of the education system, has prevailed.

I want to talk about housing. The throne speech goes on to housing. Again, a range through the favourite newspaper of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations to plough the furrow for them—understand?—but what do they do? The throne speech revisited every program, every effort and every strategy pursued by government in the past. Some are to be accelerated and some expanded; to break the back of the affordable housing problem? Do not be silly. They did not have the courage to mount that. Then they introduced the concept of selling crown land to encourage low-cost and moderate-cost housing. It was a good plan and it even got its way into the speech from the throne, half-heartedly—not what was intended when it floated the trial balloon two weeks previously, because it did not go too well. We understand.

1600

One would have thought that if the government thought this was a good idea—let us put it where it is. If Gardner Church really thought it was a good idea, if he had been able to convince the Premier or the Treasurer that it was a good idea, they would have put it in the speech from the throne and it would have been there. Instead, the backroom advisers said, “Let us put it out on a trial balloon and see how she flies first.” What happened? It did not fly too well. This was not a question of solving the problem; it was, of course, a question of appearing to address the problem. It did not go too well so they said, “Let us hide it in the speech from the throne.

I have a question for the government. Is it going to use crown land? Is it going to be sold or leased? How many units does it intend to build? By whom and at what cost? Before they visit the people, I have a more important question. Which crown land is it? It might be interesting to know. I know the member for Downsview (Mr. Cordiano) would be interested to know whether some of the crown land in Downsview might be on the list. I know he would want to share with his constituents the very good news that the government may be thinking of using the Ministry of Transportation and Communications land at Keele Street and Highway 401.

I know the member in that area would want to know and be able to boast to his constituents that on that publicly owned land there will be thousands and thousands of Ontario Housing units. I am sure he will want to take that to his constituents. We want to know whether that land is on the list. What land is on the list, friends, or

is this a general plan on no specific land? Tell us what land it is on.

Let us talk about pension reform for a second. I was, as I know my friend the member for the New Democratic Party was, intrigued and encouraged to see that the Premier once again kicked the Minister of Financial Institutions in the shins and said, “Monte, you said a couple of weeks ago that if inflation protection were brought in, all sorts of pension plans would leave the province, they would be folded up and companies would flee Ontario.” We saw the Minister of Financial Institutions during the speech from the throne looking at his papers. He would not look up at the Lieutenant Governor, he would not look across the floor and he was not addressing his favourite newspaper people in the media when the speech from the throne said we will have inflation protection.

My question now is, are we going to have it early? Are we going to have it early enough to make a difference for a lot of workers, the Goodyear workers who have been spoken about earlier by our colleague the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier)? Are we going to have it this year? Will it be put on Orders and Notices? Before they abort this parliament do they mean what they put in the speech from the throne? If they do mean it about inflation protection, let us get it on and let us get it dealt with.

I want to look at a section called “Greater Independence for Seniors.” Let us read it. The following words describe the government’s bold new initiative in the area of greater independence for seniors: “The integrated homemaker program expanded; home support further enriched; a pilot project; assistance provided; more funds; ceiling will be increased.” Do they want to tell us by how much? Does the Treasurer not know by how much? All we have are vague promises.

There is no new plan for dealing with geriatrics. There is no new plan in care for the elderly. They have a minister responsible solely for that, although no one over here kids himself that the minister has any kind of authority over the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston)—who after all has only one boss, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott)—or the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney). Nothing has been done. Two years they have had to do it and nothing has been done. Instead they just crank up old programs and try to keep them going for another period.

In the health area, I was also intrigued to see this kind of comment: “My government will inaugurate a major campaign to promote healthy

lifestyles among all Ontario citizens.” This from the government that cut its advertising campaign on smoking from \$2 million down to \$60,000. We are going to have a major new campaign to promote healthy lifestyles from a government that eliminated its antismoking campaign. Can we believe this comment? The only people who believe this comment are, perhaps, Vickers and Benson. No one else could possibly think they are going to do anything in that area.

Let us go on to some of the northern Ontario issues in the budget. Health care problems of northern Ontario are going to get special attention. They do not get one report, as most people get from this government; they are going to have two reports. That is what the government is doing for health care in northern Ontario.

They are going to have a feasibility study on ways to link northern health facilities with southern centres. They are not going to have any new health facilities in the north. They are not going to do anything directly for the north this year. They are going to have a new office to study northern health care delivery.

I say to the minister, and I say to the Minister of Education, soon to be the Minister of Health over the objection of the present Minister of Health, this has been studied to death. Not only has it been studied to death, but also the answers are sitting on the shelf in the ministry. I do not guess in this regard; they are there. They are ready to go. Are they being saved for an election, does the government not have the political will to do it, will the Treasurer not give the money to do it, or is the government waiting until it elects more members from the north? Heaven help us, there will be 30 or 40 more generations go by before it does that.

What the north needs is more medical staff and more facilities, not more studies, more offices and more bureaucracies. It is typical of this government's approach. Instead of doing something to protect the softwood lumber industry in the north, instead of doing something to change fundamentally the economic base in the north, it moves offices from Scarborough to North Bay, it moves civil servants from southern Ontario to northern Ontario. It says in health care, “We are going to have an office in health care to study more linkages,” and it washes its hands and says, “Terrific, the job is done.”

Of course, the Premier has one other tactic: have a meeting in the north, have a conference in the north. Anything short of action. Anything short of dealing with the substance of the problem.

The northern Ontario heritage fund: I have a prediction for you, Mr. Speaker. If we ever get the budget of this Treasurer, the northern Ontario heritage fund will turn out to be simply the moneys lost from northern Ontario due to this government's singular mishandling of the softwood lumber issue. We will be giving them back only the money this Premier fumbled away in his negotiations with Ottawa and British Columbia and his legendary negotiations with Washington, if we can call them that.

There is probably nothing which outlines the attitude of this government—big spending, big tax, big deficit—better than this otherwise ignored quote from the speech. I want to read it. This government is so convinced that it is the centre of all intelligence and all expertise and that the private sector is totally devoid of the ability to compete that it actually introduced this phrase into its throne speech. “A technology diffusion initiative will be introduced to ensure that government expertise is shared with the private sector.”

Think about that for a second. They are going to introduce a program to make sure that IBM Canada gets to share the expertise of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. That is what they are saying here. “A technology diffusion initiative will be introduced to ensure that government expertise,” the huge wealth of government expertise in high technology, so large it could not invest more than \$800,000 in high technology this year, is going to be “shared with the private sector.”

I expect to find the high-technology sector breaking down—I thought I would have trouble getting to work today after the throne speech—rushing down to Queen's Park to be able to share the minister's technology.

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: Yes, only one person succeeded, Abe Schwartz, and we see what happened when he had the chance to share the government's technology.

This is the key phrase from the throne speech. This is it. If you want to get a sense of who Liberals are, how they see the economy, where they see economic activity coming from, that is it: to ensure that government expertise is shared with the private sector in technology. It is not to be believed. They could not even get their technology on Highway 401 within a year. It is not to be believed.

1610

How do we find this in other areas of the throne speech in the eastern Ontario section? In eastern

Ontario, an area that is in drastic need of some special attention by the government, one would have thought they might have had a specific plan as to what to do and that they might have said: "Let us give them some money back. Let us give them a chance to develop some technology. Let us reduce the cost of doing business in eastern Ontario."

What did they do? They are going to put in a network of self-help offices, 10 of them, in eastern Ontario, plus an office in Pembroke. There they are quaking in Japan again: There are going to be—would the members believe it?—10 more offices headed by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. I bet there will be one in Belleville. What do the members say? I think there will be one in Belleville.

I can hear the Japanese saying now, "Oh no, not 10 more self-help offices of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology spread all throughout eastern Ontario." I suspect that is what they are saying. I suspect the Americans are pulling away from the freer trade negotiations saying: "No, sir. If you are going to play that hard and tough with us, we are not going to negotiate with you."

I have a suggestion for the minister. The small business people in eastern Ontario are not sitting and waiting for their new self-help offices. They are not even waiting for the new office in Pembroke. They are simply waiting for some of their tax dollars back. Ask them if they want a new office in Pembroke or whether, maybe, they want \$500 back in their pockets. Ask them whether they would like each and every one of their customers to have another \$500 to spend in their small businesses in Pembroke.

I invite the Minister of Education when he goes home this weekend and I invite the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology when he goes home to Belleville this weekend, to go up and down Main Street in Belleville and tell them the Premier told him that he could put in 10 more self-help offices throughout eastern Ontario or that they can each have \$500 back in their own pockets and \$500 in the pockets of each and every one of their customers. I invite the minister to come back here next week to tell us which one they selected. I suspect that with the exception of Vickers and Benson, Don Smith and Abe Schwartz, every one of them will say, "Give us our tax dollars back," and the minister can count on that.

I want to talk a bit about trade. It was tragic to see it. On the largest issue of the day, the issue on which Ontario has been looked to across the land

for some guidance and direction, the freer trade discussions with the Americans, the throne speech had the nerve, the gall, to have these words, "My government will continue to play a forceful and constructive role in addressing all of the issues involved in US-Canada trade negotiations...." If this Premier believes his role has been either forceful or constructive, then I fear for any of the other discussions he ever enters into. It has not been forceful. It has been weak-kneed. It has been equivocal. It has sent out conflicting messages. It has been fence-sitting to the nth degree. It has not been constructive. It has been counterproductive.

I have far more respect for the position of the New Democratic Party. I happen to oppose it dramatically, but it has been both forceful and constructive for its side of the case. The Premier has chosen to walk this province saying 260,000 jobs will be lost, which is not accurate. That is not contained in any study. It is not sustained by the studies he himself quotes. He has chosen to go to the extreme of suggesting that the Americans will peg our dollar for us. That is silliness. It is fairy-tale time. Public discussion is not forceful or constructive when, in the midst of freer trade negotiations, the Premier of the largest manufacturing province in the land goes around telling fairy tales such as that, scaring people, setting them up for job losses that need not occur, not talking to them about the potential, not talking to them about new opportunities, not talking to them about the possibilities.

I will not ask him to be bold enough and courageous enough to step up and say there will be new opportunities. I am not asking him because I know his nature, which is to sit on the fence until he has the last poll in, until he knows exactly where he is going on these issues. I understand. It is like his commitment on extra billing. He only became an advocate of banning extra billing when the results from the polls were clear, when it was clear, safe ground for him. It is the same on freer trade.

I will not ask him to be courageous enough to step forward and argue the case for freer trade. He has neither the courage nor vision to do it. However, I will say that he should not have been counterproductive. I will say he at least should have offered a balanced assessment.

He should at least have said to the people of Ontario: "We could gain as many as X thousands of new jobs"—he can ask his advisory council how many jobs might be created—"and we could lose a number of jobs. Here is my plan to keep you from losing jobs and here is how many jobs I

think you might gain." But he did not do any of that. He consciously went out on a mission to sabotage the freer trade talks and in the throne speech he embarrassed the Lieutenant Governor by asking him to suggest that the government of Ontario has played "a forceful and constructive role" in that debate. It has done the reverse.

On the trade issue, what do they propose to do? Reinforce links with our major trading partners, build adjustment programs for those industries that might be affected, promote the freer trade discussions and make sure there is a good deal for Ontario? None of that. Their strategy in the throne speech is to announce "a package of initiatives to strengthen our links with the nations of the Pacific Rim."

How do they do that? Last year's throne speech said they were going to double their exports of agricultural products to the Pacific Rim. How did they do? A 0.1 per cent increase this year, which means it will only take them 1,000 years to meet that commitment in the 1986 throne speech.

What is their other major step in trade? They are going to open an office in India.

Mr. Pope: Who is going to man that?

Mr. Grossman: Who do the members think is going to be there to cut the red ribbon for the new office in India? It will not be the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil). He is never invited along when there is heavy going. They do not trust him. They are not that dumb. He will not be there; the Premier will be there. Guess who will be standing next to the Premier? The members might have thought Don Smith, but he has already been looked after. The members might have thought Abe Schwartz, but they tried to look after him and he is not a friend any more.

Ms. Fish: Ivan.

Mr. Grossman: The members might have thought Ivan Fleischmann, but we will wait until we have a chance to get all the details on that. We know Ivan Fleischmann will look forward to giving us all the details in court one day.

How about Wilf Caplan? He has been looked after. It is not Wilf Caplan, though he knows a lot about international commerce.

Mr. Barlow: René.

Mr. Grossman: The member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine)? No. It is going to be Hershell Ezrin. It was close. It was the member for Sudbury East or Hershell Ezrin and Hershell Ezrin won out. That is their approach to trade.

I say seriously, our trading circumstance is more serious than to open an office because that is where Hershell Ezrin wants to spend the next few years of his life. Let us talk about freer trade with our largest trading partner. Let us talk about what we are doing in that market. Let us not be silly and trite in opening offices in places because Mr. Ezrin wants a place to work, when the first thing this government did was to close trading offices in the United States of America. That is silliness.

1620

I want to move on to some other areas in the throne speech and to come back to one of the themes. In every case, instead of having a policy, this government has chosen to have a study, a pilot plan, a pilot project or a report. In the most important area of high technology and our economy, it has chosen to abdicate leadership. The Premier's Council has apparently taken over the job of government. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology has learned in his two years to say one thing: "That is more than you did in 42 years." That is the only speech he has. It is the only thing he knows. It is the only thing they will trust him to say in question period.

As a former minister, I am embarrassed by many of the things he stands up and does in this House. I ask the minister, what has happened that the Premier has had to appoint a Premier's Council that now has taken on the job that traditionally was the job of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, that traditionally was the job of government? The Premier's Council, a group of volunteer business people with labour representatives on board, all volunteer, has taken over the job of allocating the centres of excellence. It says in the speech from the throne that it is going to make the decision. "The council will recommend the designation and funding of six centres of excellence in strategic fields."

Does the government not have the competence to do that? Does this government, which offers to share its technological expertise with the private sector, not know where to put the centres of excellence?

Let me also ask the minister this: Do the ministries of Industry, Trade and Technology and Treasury and Economics—both ministries I had the honour to serve at the head of—not have the capability to do research studies focusing on the international competitive position of our key industries? Did they need the Premier's Council to take two years to study "the international competitive position of 15 key Ontario industry

sectors"? Do they need the Premier's Council to assess the capability of our educational, science and technology infrastructure? Is that not the job of the ministries?

I say quite clearly to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, and I would say it to the Treasurer and Minister of Economics if he were here, that this was precisely the job of those ministries when we were there. The ministries have not changed. They have world-class—to use the Premier's favourite word—people there. The experts are there. Why hand it over? Did they lack the courage to take it on? Did they want to use it as a trial balloon? What have they done, added a new layer of bureaucracy? Why did they do away with the Ontario Economic Council if they were going to set up a new board and give half the job of the ministries of Industry, Trade and Technology and Treasury and Economics over to volunteers?

Why abandon their responsibilities? They have abdicated their responsibilities in education, high technology and freer trade. They have abdicated in a wide variety of economic matters, handed it over to the Premier's Council and said, "Listen, it is better than the last 42 years." Well, it is not; it simply is not.

I have a word about the contradictory words of the speech from the throne when it comes to something as important as child care. We thought that this province, with the vast resources it has, would step up to the table on child care, as the minister has been promising since he took office two years ago.

Just conceive of this: The government talked, not about doing something about child care, not about what it was prepared to do immediately with the \$919 million extra it has, but about being willing to proceed in the child care area in conjunction with the federal government. That is what it wrote last Tuesday, that it was waiting on the federal government initiatives and was looking forward to sharing the responsibility with the federal government to enable it to proceed.

That was Tuesday. On Thursday evening, 48 hours later, the Premier goes to the Meech Lake conference and agrees explicitly to a clause that would allow Ontario to opt out of the national child care strategy. My simple question is, why did he write it in on Tuesday if on Thursday—I suspect that on Tuesday he already knew—he was going to reserve the right to opt out? If it was their intention to opt out, to keep that right to opt out, why put that qualifier in? Why not say in the throne speech on Tuesday, "We in Ontario are

going to proceed with a child care strategy all of our own, as we promised when we came to office, and we hope the federal government might participate, but if it does not, it does not"?

The Premier knew on Tuesday, and he certainly knows today, that he has every right to proceed with a child care strategy without the federal government. He knows he has the money to do it. He knows he has given all the speeches on the subject. Why not boldly say in the throne speech, "We are going to do it, and here is how we are going to do it"? The answer is because, as in so many other issues, they simply want to be on the record as being pledged to do something but not be called to account for having had to do it before they face the people. It is inconsistent. It is covering off their bets. It is to do anything but lead. There is nothing in this throne speech that leads.

We could go on at some length, as the Lieutenant Governor was forced to do. We could go on and use a great deal of time in this House simply to repeat the job of government; simply to say what the government's goals should be, not what they are; simply to say that pilot projects, studies, reports, analyses, enriched funding are all the goals of government. We all know that. That adds nothing to the debate.

What I want to say is that this government may well succeed, sticking with the cosmetics; I do not think so. Political life has shown me that cosmetics never prevail in Ontario, that substance prevails in the longer term over style, that the Premier cannot talk about increasing the transportation system in northern Ontario at the same time he has taken \$180 million extra out of the taxpayers of Ontario in gasoline taxes and not reinvested it back in northern highways.

But he cannot get away for long in saying to the Ontario Good Roads Association that if only they will agree to a one-cent-a-litre increase in gasoline tax, then the Treasurer will give them the money for more roads, because the Treasurer increased that tax by more than one cent a litre this year and he did not give them back the money. That will work for only one speech. It will work for only one good roads convention. It will work for only a year, a year and a half. After that, it begins to catch up.

We, the people of Ontario, were entitled this year to a government standing up with a direction, not with pilot projects; to a government that clearly said, "We have this much money to spend and here is how we are going to spend it"; to a government that set out a plan, not a pious hope. We got none of that. We got a throne

speech that was long on verbiage, short on substance; long on promises, short on plans.

We cannot endorse a government that chooses as its *modus operandi* pious hopes and a job description in the throne speech. It has left us far short. There is no area in which this throne speech has seized the initiative, not in freer trade discussions, not in high technology, certainly not in education, not in child care, not in international trade and not in housing. In all those areas, the Premier simply chose to repeat a pious hope. He simply said he hopes to increase the supply of housing. He said he would like to improve the quality of education. He said he would continue to participate in freer trade talks. He has talked about pilot projects across the map.

When it came to seizing the initiative; when it came to saying to seniors, "Here is a new quality of life"; when it came to saying to the disabled, "Here is specifically what we are going to do"; when it came to our young people needing science and mathematics training; when it came to post-secondary education and the crying needs there; when it came to portable classrooms; when it came to improving transportation links in Metropolitan Toronto—ask Dennis Flynn—or in northern Ontario, the government simply got away with saying, "We would like to do this." It did nothing of the sort.

It did not lay out a plan; it did not spend money; it did not make a commitment. It was the most shallow effort I have seen in political life in 12 years in the federal or provincial House. I say "shallow" because they have the money do it.

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They had an opportunity which will not return quickly to government. They had an opportunity in Ontario in 1987 to say that they are wallowing in money and that they have an economic boom and increased tax levels which have produced for them the financial flexibility to solve a great many problems. Instead of choosing to solve any, they have promised to think about a lot.

They had an opportunity, at this point in our history, to have seized the initiative and to have opened up a new vista for northern Ontario, to have said to the north, "An unemployment rate of eight per cent, nine per cent or 10 per cent in the midst of a tremendous boom in southern Ontario is unacceptable, and we are going to invest that money back in the north."

They had an opportunity to say that the unemployment gap between northern Ontario and southern Ontario has not been closed and, therefore, they will recycle tax money with a northern Ontario tax credit. They had an

opportunity this time to put a massive program in place to build the northern highways that might help a little bit with the gasoline tax revenue they took from the taxpayers last year.

They had an opportunity this year to eliminate, not reduce, the number of portable classrooms in two regions. They had an opportunity to put computers in the classroom this year, but they missed the chance. They had the opportunity this year to do something about mathematics, technology and science in the schools, and they chose instead to study it in grade 11 in 1992.

They had the chance this year to seize our housing crisis and to step forward and say, "Here is a medium-term plan on the affordability side," and they chose not to do it. They settled for trial balloons in the newspapers instead of an action plan in the throne speech.

They had an opportunity to take the \$47 million in unspent old money and the \$50 million in unspent new money for high technology and make some big investments, be they at the universities, directly to industry or—I would not object—in government-based high technology, but they did none of those things.

After two years in office, they had the opportunity this year to step forward in some key sectors and lay out some specific plans, but they instead asked the Premier's Council to report by the end of 1987 on what we ought to do in 15 key industries.

They had the opportunity this year to take the care-for-the-aged scenario and make the fundamental investments that will leap the institutional barriers that lay in place, and they chose not to do that either.

In no area were they bold; in no area did they take advantage of the tremendous resources and make a fundamental difference for the people of Ontario.

In any event, we will come out of this tremendous boom in southern Ontario with only two things. We will come out with a deficit not as much dented as it could have been. We will come out with a deficit which will greatly cripple the government's successors and our successors in terms of their ability to stop shopping with their children's credit card in the years to come, when it is going to be needed during a recession.

The second thing we will come out of this time with is such bloated spending and such incredible tax levels that our ability to compete during the recession will have been hampered: 19 tax increases. I say to the Minister of Education that I hope in the new office in Pembroke they will have a list of the 19 new tax increases brought in

by that government over there, which in two years has taken \$4.75 billion more taxes from the people of Ontario.

Our heritage from this government and this throne speech will be twofold: high deficits and high taxes, and a crippling of our ability to compete. We will have a trade office in India and self-help offices in eastern Ontario, but our ability to compete, to attract investment, to get into the American market, will have been totally destroyed by high taxes, high deficits and a negative, hypocritical approach towards freer trade from the government of Ontario. After two years, that will be the heritage of this throne speech and this government.

Our education system will be the same in 1992, when the minister finally gets around to studying mathematics in grade 11, as it was last year and the year before that. There will be no changes from 1985 to 1992—none.

In the absence of any desire by this government to reform, in the absence of the kind of reform zeal that one would have thought 42 years on these benches might have brought the so-called reformers over there, in the absence of any of that idealism—the last vestige of which, of course, was the Minister of Education—in the absence of all that, now that it has all been depleted, we ask one thing: Would it not have been better simply to have given some money back to the taxpayers; to have said, before the member for Cochrane North, the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio) and a number of others gobble up that money in silly frills, “Why do we not give it back to the small business people in eastern Ontario? Why do we not give them a chance in their own community?”

There is nothing this government has even promised to do that is going to make a difference in all the small communities spread throughout eastern Ontario, nothing that is going to make an impact anywhere across northern Ontario approaching the impact of its total failure on the softwood lumber issue and nothing it is going to do that is going to boost the economy of this province that approaches the significance of pumping \$1 billion back into the hands of the people instead of back into the hands of Gardner Church, Pat Lavelle and the 80,000 civil servants, all of whom, together with Hershell Ezrin and the other advisers, will find lots of excuses and ways for the government to spend it.

The people of Ontario simply deserve more. I know the government will want to get its budget out. I know that in the budget it will outline specifically how much money is allocated to

these initiatives. I know it will account for every one of these programs. I put the government on notice now that we will do an audit of the throne speech, tracing it through the budget, and see just how much is reflected in that budget, how much it is committed to doing in the next year and how serious it is about these commitments. We will know how serious the government is when we see whether it actually has the courage and willingness to bring forward a budget for 1987.

That budget should do more than reflect whatever they intend to do out of this throne speech. It should simply offer a 10 per cent reduction in personal income tax and cut retail sales tax to six per cent. It should also—and they all have the flexibility to do it—do something that I remember the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) used to talk to us about all the time, before he had the opportunity to spend the money over there. Remember how he used to believe in lower deficits and balanced budgets? Remember the free enterpriser?

They will have an opportunity to reduce the deficit significantly.

Mr. Barlow: All that for a car, Vince.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: A used one at that.

Mr. Grossman: They got a used minister.

It suits my party's partisan political needs and agenda very well to have this throne speech. It is more and less than we could have hoped for. It is perfect to allow us to go to the people, be it when we should go, in 1989, or when Mr. Goldfarb, Mr. Ezrin and others say we ought to go, in 1987. At that time we will be able to say: “Here, find the strategy; find the economic plans; find the social programs; find the commitment.” It is not here, so it suits our partisan political agenda.

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I will admit I would have been happier today had this been a document which instead dealt in three or four specifics, with an actual game plan for the economy, for the environment, for care for the elderly, for the education system; a thoughtful speech, setting out an action plan, setting out a clear financial commitment; not one, I say to the Minister of Education, to begin to replace portable classrooms next year and not this year, not one to begin to test people in 1992 but to do it all this year.

I had hoped this would have offered a Liberal vision and a Liberal plan for the economy, for the environment, for housing, for child care, so we could look at their plan and we could put ours to the people, and the people would have a clear selection between two approaches. Happily for

our partisan political purposes, they will have the opportunity to pick between our approach and, as I have called it, dropping money from a low-flying aircraft.

I leave it to the Premier to explain how this scatter-gun approach, without a theme or a direction, will be better for the people of Ontario than a focused Progressive Conservative approach, which we will have the opportunity to present when Progressive Conservatives deem it appropriate. When we present that alternative, it will be an alternative not to another game plan but to chaos, to disorganization, to the politics of "Promise everything and plan for nothing." It will be a distinct change.

I say with some regret that the people of this province would be far better served if we had a government that was mesmerized not by its short-term political needs but instead by the willingness and need to build up a record over four years and use this throne speech as the second stepping-stone to changing economic directions in Ontario.

I say to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology, who is most fond of saying things about the last 42 years, that the key thing about those 42 years is that they worked for those 42 years. That is one of the reasons—not the major reason, but one of the reasons—the economy is growing so well today.

But that was then; this is now. Different things are needed for the 1980s and 1990s than were needed in the 1960s, the 1970s and the early 1980s. This government had the chance on Tuesday last to lay before us a different strategy for the 1980s and 1990s and chose instead to lapse back, not to the early 1980s, not even to the 1970s, but maybe to the 1960s and 1950s. That abdication of responsibility, that unwillingness to invest, will come back to haunt the government.

Finally, we have had the chance to see the opposition. We have had the chance to see what the government would do standing alone. It has now had the opportunity, thanks to the events of June 4, 1985, to see if the Minister of Education can do more than read from Rosemary Speirs's book. We have had the chance to see it. The Premier has chosen to write a throne speech which is a compilation of all the pious hopes and

wishes of all his members and all his civil servants. He has failed. He has brought forward a shallow, empty document.

My colleagues and I have been given a massive opportunity to step into an enormous vacuum, to say to the people of Ontario, "You have had two years, you have had three years, you have had four years of David Peterson"—we will give him the chance—"and you have higher deficits; higher taxes; no change in your education system; no change in your economic system; no change other than more speeches on the environment; no change in housing policy; no improvement in low-cost affordable housing; in particular, no change in northern Ontario except for the softwood lumber loss of jobs, no changes in the northern transportation network."

The government will have to go to the people, as the Premier himself has said, based upon its record. Based upon its record, I say it will be called to account finally. The government has had its chance to defend itself. It had its chance to turn the page. It has failed to lift the page, let alone turn it. The government is good at buzzwords. It is good at the speeches. It is good at world-class speeches and at "putting the right ingredients together and creating the critical mass for cross-fertilization." That will do nothing for our economic future. It will do nothing for the government's political future.

My colleagues and I, ready as we are to put together an alternative platform, ready as we are to come together with substance, not style, and with real policies, not pious hopes, intend to vote against this pot-pourri of clichés and buzzwords. We intend to vote against government that leaves our province stalled somewhere in the middle of the 20th century. We are prepared to force this government to create an agenda, to stick to the agenda and to get back to the job of governing; indeed, after two years, now that it is without the help of the third party, to get on with governing this province.

We urge all members of this House to join with us in voting against this shallow collection of clichés, buzzwords and vague promises.

On motion by Mr. Warner, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

APPENDIX

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS*

(124 members)

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Lieutenant Governor: Hon. L. M. Alexander, PC, QC

Speaker: Hon. H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

-
- Allen, R. (Hamilton West NDP)
 Andrewes, P. W. (Lincoln PC)
 Ashe, G. L. (Durham West PC)
 Baetz, R. C. (Ottawa West PC)
 Barlow, W. W. (Cambridge PC)
 Bennett, C. F. (Ottawa South PC)
 Bernier, L. (Kenora PC)
 Bossy, M. L. (Chatham-Kent L)
- Bradley, Hon. J. J.**, Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breagh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Bryden, M. H. (Beaches-Woodbine NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Caplan, Hon. E. (Oriole L)
 Charlton, B. A. (Hamilton Mountain NDP)
- Conway, Hon. S. G.**, Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, D. R. (Kitchener L)
 Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Cordiano, J. (Downsview L)
 Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
 Cureatz, S. L. (Durham East PC)
- Curling, Hon. A.**, Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
 Davis, W. C. (Scarborough Centre PC)
 Dean, G. H. (Wentworth PC)
- Eakins, Hon. J. F.**, Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Victoria-Haliburton L)
- Edighoffer, Hon. H. A.**, Speaker (Perth L)
- Elston, Hon. M. J.**, Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
 Epp, H. A. (Waterloo North L)
 Eves, E. L. (Parry Sound PC)
 Ferraro, R. E. (Wellington South L)
 Fish, S. A. (St. George PC)
 Fontaine, R. (Cochrane North L)
 Foulds, J. F. (Port Arthur NDP)
- Fulton, Hon. E.**, Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
 Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
 Gillies, P. A. (Brantford PC)
 Gordon, J. K. (Sudbury PC)
 Grande, T. (Oakwood NDP)
- Grandmaitre, Hon. B. C.**, Minister of Municipal Affairs (Ottawa East L)
 Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
 Grier, R. A. (Lakeshore NDP)
 Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
 Guindon, L. B. (Cornwall PC)
 Haggerty, R. (Erie L)
 Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
 Hart, C. E. (York East L)
 Hayes, P. (Essex North NDP)
 Henderson, D. J. (Humber L)
 Hennessy, M. (Fort William PC)
 Jackson, C. (Burlington South PC)
 Johnson, J. M. (Wellington-Dufferin-Peel PC)
 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
- Kerrio, Hon. V. G.**, Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
- Keyes, Hon. K. A.**, Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services (Kingston and the Islands L)
 Knight, D. S. (Halton-Burlington L)
- Kwinter, Hon. M.**, Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Wilson Heights L)
 Lane, J. G. (Algoma-Manitoulin PC)
 Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
 Leluk, N. G. (York West PC)
 Lupusella, A. (Dovercourt L)
 Mackenzie, R. W. (Hamilton East NDP)
 Mancini, R. (Essex South L)
 Marland, M. (Mississauga South PC)
 Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
 McCaffrey, R. B. (Armourdale PC)
 McCague, G. R. (Dufferin-Simcoe PC)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
 McFadden, D. J. (Eglinton PC)
 McGuigan, J. F. (Kent-Elgin L)
 McKessock, R. (Grey L)
 McLean, A. K. (Simcoe East PC)
 McNeil, R. K. (Elgin PC)
 Miller, F. S. (Muskoka PC)
 Miller, G. I. (Haldimand-Norfolk L)
 Mitchell, R. C. (Carleton PC)
 Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of Committee of the Whole House (Carleton East L)
 Morin-Strom, K. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)

Newman, B. (Windsor-Walkerville L)

Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)

O'Connor, T. P. (Oakville PC)

Offer, S. (Mississauga North L)

O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)

Partington, P. (Brock PC)

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)

Philip, E. T. (Etobicoke NDP)

Pierce, F. J. (Rainy River PC)

Poirier, J. (Prescott-Russell L)

Pollock, J. (Hastings-Peterborough PC)

Polsinelli, C. (Yorkview L)

Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)

Pouliot, G. (Lake Nipigon NDP)

Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)

Ramsay, D. (Timiskaming L)

Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)

Reycraft, D. R. (Middlesex L)

Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food (Huron-Middlesex L)

Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)

Runciman, R. W. (Leeds PC)

Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio (Parkdale L)

Sargent, E. C. (Grey-Bruce L)

Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General (St. David L)

Sheppard, H. N. (Northumberland PC)

Shymko, Y. R. (High Park-Swansea PC)

Smith, D. W. (Lambton L)

Smith, E. J. (London South L)

Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development (York North L)

South, L. (Frontenac-Addington L)

Stephenson, B. M. (York Mills PC)

Sterling, N. W. (Carleton-Grenville PC)

Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)

Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)

Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services (Kitchener-Wilmot L)

Taylor, J. A. (Prince Edward-Lennox PC)

Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House (Oxford PC)

Turner, J. M. (Peterborough PC)

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)

Villeneuve, N. (Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry PC)

Ward, C. C. (Wentworth North L)

Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)

Wildman, B. (Algoma NDP)

Wiseman, D. J. (Lanark PC)

Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour (Windsor-Sandwich L)

Yakabuski, P. J. (Renfrew South PC)

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines

Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet

Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services

Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment

Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General and acting Solicitor General

Riddell, Hon. J. K., Minister of Agriculture and Food

Eakins, Hon. J. F., Minister of Tourism and Recreation

Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy

O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology

Sweeney, Hon. J., Minister of Community and Social Services

Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health

Wrye, Hon. W. M., Minister of Labour

Grandmaître, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs

Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing

Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communication

Keyes, Hon. K. A., Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services

Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture

Sorbara, Hon. G. S., Minister of Colleges and Universities and Minister of Skills Development

Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio

Ruprecht, Hon. T., Minister without Portfolio

PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANTS

Bossy, M. L., assistant to the Minister of Housing (Chatham-Kent L)

Cordiano, J., assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Downsview L)

Epp, H. A., assistant to the Treasurer and the Minister of Revenue (Waterloo North L)

Ferraro, R. E., assistant to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Wellington South L)

Fontaine, R., assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Cochrane North L)

Haggerty, R., assistant to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Erie L)

Hart, C. E., assistant to the Minister of Health (York East L)

Henderson, D. J., assistant to the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Humber L)

Knight, D. S., assistant to the Chairman of Management Board of Cabinet (Halton-Burlington L)

McGuigan, J. F., assistant to the Minister of Natural Resources (Kent-Elgin L)

McKessock, R., assistant to the Solicitor General and the Minister of Correctional Services (Grey L)

Miller, G. I., assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Haldimand-Norfolk L)

Offer, S., assistant to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mississauga North L)

Poirier, J., assistant to the Minister of Energy (Prescott-Russell L)

Polsinelli, C., assistant to the Minister of Labour (Yorkview L)

Ramsay, D., assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Timiskaming L)

Reycraft, D. R., assistant to the Minister of Education (Middlesex L)

Sargent, E. C., assistant to the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Grey-Bruce L)

South, L., assistant to the Minister of the Environment (Frontenac-Addington L)

Ward, C. C., assistant to the Attorney General (Wentworth North L)

STANDING COMMITTEES

Administration of justice: members, Messrs. Brandt, Charlton, D. R. Cooke, Ms. Fish, Ms. Gigantes, Messrs. O'Connor, Partington,

Poirier, Polsinelli, Rowe and Ward; clerk, L. Mellor.

Finance and economic affairs: members, Messrs. Ashe, D. R. Cooke, Cordiano, Ferraro, Haggerty, Mackenzie, McFadden, Morin-Strom, Ramsay, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Taylor; clerk, F. Carrozza.

General government: members, Mrs. Grier, Messrs. Guindon, Lane, Lupusella, McCague, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Offer, Pollock, Sheppard and Swart; clerk, D. Deller.

Government agencies: members, Messrs. Fontaine, Foulds, Gregory, Hayes, J. M. Johnson, Leluk, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. Mitchell, Polsinelli, Sargent and D. W. Smith; clerk, D. Arnott.

Legislative Assembly: members, Messrs. Bossy, Breagh, Mancini, Martel, Morin, Newman, Sterling, Treleaven, Turner, Villeneuve and Warner; clerk, S. Forsyth.

Ombudsman: members, Messrs. Bossy, Hayes, Henderson, Hennessy, Mancini, McLean, McNeil, Morin, Philip, Sheppard and Shymko; clerk, T. Decker.

Public accounts: members, Messrs. Barlow, Callahan, Cousens, Epp, Gillies, Mancini, Philip, Pope, Runciman, D. W. Smith and Wildman; clerk, D. Arnott.

Regulations and private bills: members, Ms. Bryden, Messrs. Callahan, Dean, Haggerty, Hennessy, Lupusella, McKessock, G. I. Miller, Pouliot, Shymko and Wiseman; clerk, T. Manikel.

Resources development: members, Mr. Bernier, Ms. Caplan, Messrs. Gordon, Laughren, McGuigan, Offer, Pierce, Reville, South, Stevenson and Wildman; clerk, T. Decker.

Social development: members, Messrs. Allen, Andrewes, Baetz, Callahan, Cordiano, Davis, Grande, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Jackson, R. F. Johnston and Reycraft; clerk, F. Carrozza.

SELECT COMMITTEES

Environment: members, Messrs. Charlton, Eves, Gillies, Mrs. Grier, Messrs. Henderson, Knight, Mrs. Marland, Messrs. G. I. Miller, Partington, D. W. Smith and South; clerk, T. Manikel.

Health: chairman, Mr. Callahan; members, Messrs. Andrewes, Baetz, D. S. Cooke, Cordiano, Ms. Hart, Messrs. Henderson, R. F. Johnston, Reycraft, Miss Stephenson and Mr. Turner; clerk, D. Deller.

Retail store hours: chairman: Mr. O'Connor; vice-chairman, Mr. Guindon; members, Messrs. Barlow, Bernier, Philip, Polsinelli, Reville, Sargent, Shymko, D. W. Smith and Ms. E. J. Smith; clerk, L. Mellor.

*The lists in this appendix, brought up to date as necessary, are published in Hansard in the first and last issues of each session and on the first sitting day of each month.

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Tuesday, May 5, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, May 5, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

GEORGE BUKATOR

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Mr. Speaker, may I have the concurrence of the House to bring to its attention the death of a former member?

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I wish to bring to the attention of the Legislature the death of a former member, a Niagara Falls politician and a long-time personal friend.

George Bukator, who died last week at the age of 74, enthusiastically served his province and his community for many years. He represented the former riding of Niagara in this Legislature from 1959 to 1971. He served as a councillor and reeve in the village of Chippewa before entering provincial politics. When he left the Legislature, he continued his distinguished political career by serving as mayor of Niagara Falls from 1973 to 1978. He also served as vice-president of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and as Ontario director of the Association of Mayors and Reeves. In addition, he served for six years on the Niagara Parks Commission.

These accomplishments are ones for which George Bukator is best known outside Niagara Falls, but in my city, his name is also synonymous with dedication to the good of our community. His contributions to the community were honoured with the dedication of the George Bukator Park and the George Bukator Swimming Pool at the boys' club. That club held a special place in George Bukator's heart. An excellent swimmer himself, his fund-raising efforts in the club swimathon resulted in his being awarded a life membership.

Many other organizations and worthy causes benefited from the efforts of George Bukator over the years. For instance, Nancy Reynolds, writing in the Niagara Falls Review, notes that he was awarded the Carnegie medal for saving three lives in near drownings in the Niagara and Welland rivers. He also received the Bicentennial medal and was an honorary member of branch 396, Royal Canadian Legion.

I have known the Bukator family for many years, and it is with deep personal sadness that I

extend the sympathy of this Legislature to his wife, Bernice, and his daughters, Yvonne, Karen and Nancy.

Mr. Partington: I would like to join with the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio) in expressing the tribute he paid to the late Mr. Bukator. On behalf of my party, I would like to honour the high regard in which Mr. Bukator was held by all the citizens of not only Niagara Falls but indeed of the Niagara area as well. Clearly, his reputation was one of an outstanding politician, an excellent mayor and a good citizen of Niagara. We would also join in expressing to his family our sorrow in his passing.

Mr. Swart: On behalf of myself and my party, I also would like to pay tribute to Mr. Bukator. I knew him well from being on county council with him for a number of years. In fact, I was one of those who was instrumental in helping to get him elected warden there by a very narrow margin. I want to say that he brought a period of reform to that county council and had the respect of the members and the public in Welland county.

It has been mentioned that he was a brave man and that he saved, at great risk to himself, three lives in the Niagara River. Certainly in his service on council he was respected. He practised openness. He had a rapport with the public and endeavoured to serve the people of his municipality. Though I did not sit here in the Legislature with him, I assume that he practised that same kind of public service here.

I join with all other members of the Legislature in expressing sympathy to the family and acknowledgement of the tremendous service that George Bukator gave to his own municipality and to this province.

Mr. Speaker: I will make certain that a copy of this Hansard is sent to the Bukator family showing your expression of sympathy.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Harris: Northerners continue to suffer. The Premier (Mr. Peterson), who once described northerners as a bunch of whiners and complainers, now says he will take great delight in

receiving northern solutions to northern problems. There are many northern solutions to northern problems, and we do not begin the search for them today.

The people of Nipissing have had a plan to address local health concerns. This plan was unfolding well before this government took office. Yet this Liberal administration responds by delaying new north-based joint hospital projects by two years so far.

Our community has a plan to address a serious environmental concern, the Nipissing watershed. It has been in the works for years. This Liberal administration responds by delaying the creation of a single watershed flood control body by more than two years.

It has failed to support plans by the major employer in Sturgeon Falls to reduce a flood threat that could close the mill, that of excavation of the tailrace obstructions below the power dam, which has been delayed by one year.

We have a plan to address winter tourism and development, brought forth by northerners to create more jobs. This Liberal administration responds by delaying the major ski development at Mount Antoine by more than a year so far.

Northerners have had a plan to address transportation concerns. This Liberal administration responds by delaying Highway 11 four-laning by two years so far.

It refused to lower gasoline prices, as was promised in 1985, which are clearly detrimental to all northern Ontario residents. In fact, the only elected voice from the north opposes lowered northern gas prices.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member's time has expired.

1340

ROOMERS, BOARDERS AND LODGERS

Mr. Reville: What about the commitment of this government to roomers? Time is running out. It is not an amusing situation for the people who have eight days of security left. On May 13, the people at 433 Ontario Street will join hundreds of other roomers in this province whom this government has left totally unprotected by the Landlord and Tenant Act.

These are not just numbers. It is very interesting that today at the Toronto regional conference on homelessness the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) talked about the interest of this government in doing something about homelessness. One of the things that could be done very quickly and very easily would be to prevent people from becoming homeless by

being evicted without cause from their rooming houses, so that Al Maddox, Gary Costello, Karen St. Germain, Ken Austin, Larry Schaeffer and at least 120 other people I know of who are facing eviction at this moment will have the same kind of protection that every other tenant in this province has, and that is something this government has known about since it took office. It should move today to solve that problem.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. O'Connor: I would like to address the \$240,000, or less than two per cent, response of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) to the Halton Board of Education's \$16-million needs.

His press release announcing this grossly inadequate funding boldly stated this was "proof of the commitment of this government to the importance and priority we place on education." His only commitment in Halton is to gasoline and buses instead of bricks and mortar.

Oakville desperately needs three new schools. We are experiencing areas of rapid, almost unprecedented growth. The prime concern of any family moving into a new neighbourhood is its school. It is the one institution that brings a neighbourhood together and creates a sense of community.

Yes, we are educating our 42,000 students, but what is the quality of that education when they are bused to school and taught in portables and are unable to participate in any extracurricular activities? We owe them an education in an environment that is conducive to learning.

We are the 10th largest school board in this province. How can the minister totally disregard the legitimate needs of our students? The message he has sent is loud and clear: less than two per cent funding, regardless of the actual needs or the rhetoric of his press release. We need those schools; we must have funding approval for them. If there is any commitment by this government to educating Halton's students, the minister must reverse this disgraceful decision.

NIAGARA REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Swart: Today, I will be tabling a petition containing 8,868 names which calls on this government to do a comprehensive examination of local government in the Niagara region. The intent is that the Niagara regional government should be substantially revised or an alternative provided or abandoned entirely.

This request has great validity. There is substantial evidence that total municipal taxation

is much higher in communities inside regional governments than elsewhere in Ontario. There was great hope that the Niagara regional government planning would preserve our fruit lands and other prime farm land. In fact, it has been an exercise in futility.

One only needs to drive from Toronto to Niagara Falls to realize that the bulk of the urban development in this province is still taking place on our best land, particularly in the Niagara region. Problems of the Niagara Regional Police demonstrate that regionalism has not convinced the Niagara Citizens' Committee that policing has been improved.

Simply, Niagara regional government is too big and unaccountable. Perhaps if my original proposals had been accepted, for two smaller regional governments in Niagara instead of the huge one, and governments with less power at the upper level and an elected chairman, these problems would not be so severe.

Simply, the comprehensive review is needed. It must look at all matters in principle and in detail. There can be no sacred cows or vested interest. I call on the government to carry out the wishes of the citizens' committee of Niagara.

MINISTRY RELOCATION

Mr. Ferraro: I have one message and a commercial to give to the House today.

The first message is a sincere thank-you from the people of my riding to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell), the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and indeed the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and cabinet for their wise decision to transfer the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to the city of Guelph.

It makes all the sense in the world. Perhaps I should add that while admittedly I had very limited involvement with that decision I am fully prepared to take all the credit, for very selfish reasons.

GUELPH SPRING FESTIVAL

Mr. Ferraro: I should point out to the House as well that Guelph is not only famous for agriculture. This is the 20th year of the Guelph Spring Festival, which most members of the House will know—

Interjections.

Mr. Ferraro: They are criticizing my tie, Mr. Speaker. I want you to know it matches the flamingos in my front yard.

It is the 20th year of the Guelph Spring Festival, one of the world's up-and-coming and most famous cultural festivals and indeed some-

thing we are extremely proud of in the city of Guelph. I point out to the members of the House and all the people of Ontario that the festival will run until May 15. As much as I hate to admit it, a lot of the members of this House need some culture. I strongly invite them to the Guelph Spring Festival.

SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Mr. Pope: On February 10 and 11, 1987, the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) and I had a difference of opinion on the reduction of government funding to amateur sports and sports organizations in this province. Since that time, unsolicited, I have received letters from the Iroquois Falls Secondary School, signed by David Misener, which was sent to the minister personally with a copy to myself; and a letter directly from Sister Fay Edmonds, principal at O'Gorman High School. In both cases, they are complaining about the same thing.

I will quote two paragraphs from Sister Fay Edmonds's letter.

"Schools in northern Ontario must spend large sums to participate in their own associations due to the distance between communities. Most Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations championships are held in southern Ontario, which is an added financial burden to qualifying northern Ontario schools. In the past, the grants covered 50 per cent of travel costs. This has been reduced to 25 per cent now.

"It is my hope that you will study the situation and recommend changes to the grant structure so that more Wintario grants will be made available to OFSAA."

Who is right and who is wrong?

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Mr. Warner: Like many other people in the community that is served by the Durham College, I am asking the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) to do something which is quite uncharacteristic of him, and that is to show some leadership and to help prevent the cancellation of the dental hygiene course.

As Dr. Douglas Smith writes:

"If you cancel this course you will be failing to fill your mandate to the community. If this course is cancelled at Durham College it will make it very difficult for the dental profession to meet the requirements of their patients and the public at large. The dental community can react on your behalf. Simply let us know what you need and give us an opportunity to help us to meet those needs." Do not cancel the program.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Hon. Mr. Scott: Later today, I will be introducing a bill which effects a complete revision of the Justices of the Peace Act.

Ontario's existing justices of the peace legislation has developed over the years in a piecemeal, haphazard manner. The bill I am introducing today represents for the first time since Confederation, I think, a fundamental rethinking and restructuring of the system.

Justices of the peace have often been called the front-line troops of the criminal justice system. It is through them that many Ontario citizens have their first contact with the system.

As most members are aware, justices of the peace perform a wide variety of functions, including receiving informations and issuing process in criminal proceedings, issuing search warrants, conducting bail hearings and presiding over trials of provincial offences.

Several years ago, Professor Alan Mewett of the faculty of law in the University of Toronto conducted a study of the justices of the peace system in Ontario. The recommendations in his report, long on the shelf, form the basis for much of the bill I will be introducing today.

A major structural change recommended by Professor Mewett was that a provincial judge should be appointed to the position of co-ordinator of justices of the peace, with specific responsibility for the supervision, assignment and organization of justices throughout the province. The bill implements this proposal. Provincial co-ordination will promote the effective provision of justice of the peace services in all areas of the province where these services are required. The co-ordinator will also be responsible for the development and delivery of educational programs designed to enhance further and maintain the high standards of competence.

Another major provision of the bill will abolish the archaic system of paying many justices of the peace by fee. My ministry has had grave concerns with this system of compensation since the advent of the Charter of Rights and its guarantee of independence for judicial officers. Although the Ontario Court of Appeal has ruled that safeguards included in the existing legislation permit the fee system to be used without contravening the Charter of Rights, I am of the firm view that reform of the system is nevertheless desirable, if not essential. Justice must be seen to be done. This bill will provide that instead of individual fees for each service, a part-time

justice of the peace will be paid a fixed, proportional salary based on the co-ordinator's determination of the justice's work load.

1350

The genesis of this bill lies in the work of Professor Mewett and I again wish to acknowledge our debt and the debt of the province to him. Without his report, I expect we would still be struggling with some of the issues that are now addressed in this legislation.

The legislation also establishes a system of appointing justices and reviewing their conduct similar to the system that has long been in place with respect to provincial judges. The restructured Justices of the Peace Review Council will consider and report on all proposed appointments of justices and will conduct investigations of complaints according to the same procedures that apply to the Judicial Council for Provincial Judges. The Justices of the Peace Review Council will for the first time include a justice of the peace, as well as representatives of the public. Moreover, a justice will no longer be subject to removal from office as a result of a review council investigation without a public inquiry first being conducted.

I believe this legislation represents one more step towards the goal of greater access to the judicial system. I know the bill will receive careful consideration by my colleagues in the House, by the justices themselves—with whom it has been broadly discussed—by the legal profession and by the general public. I look forward to receiving their suggestions and to discussing the bill with each of them in the near future.

ONTARIO FAMILY FARM INTEREST RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Hon. Mr. Riddell: I would like to inform the honourable members that a very important deadline is approaching.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: Should I tell them, Premier?

May 18 is the last day for farmers to apply for the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program for the current year. We call this program OFFIRR Plus for short and it has been a real success story right from the start.

It is a four-year program to help farmers who have been hurt by low commodity prices and high interest rates. Since its inception in 1985, the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program paid out close to \$85 million to over 11,000 farmers. Thousands of applications are

still being processed and we expect another flood of applications before the May 18 deadline.

Applications must be postmarked by Monday, May 18, 1987, in order to be eligible for assistance under this program.

We are doing our utmost to ensure that farm families in Ontario who need this program and who want to take part in it have every opportunity to do so.

I urge all rural members to ensure that farmers in their areas get their applications in before the deadline in order to qualify for interest rate assistance under the program. May 18 is the deadline. Members should let their farmers know.

BUDGET

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to advise the House that I hope to read the 1987 budget to the Legislature on Wednesday, May 20, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

RESPONSES

BUDGET

Mr. Harris: I am pleased to respond to the Treasurer's statement and to indicate that it is the Treasurer's and the government's prerogative when they want to introduce the budget. We, of course, will be fully co-operative in ensuring that there will be no problems with the May 20 date.

I know how important this day is for a Treasurer and the planning and what not that go into an event of this significance and magnitude, and the security and all the preparations. As well, we look forward to a significant reduction in the tremendous tax burden that Ontarians now bear.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Of course, on the other hand, if you want to go on May 14—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

ONTARIO FAMILY FARM INTEREST RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Andrewes: I want to respond briefly to the paid political announcement of the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell). The minister chooses to treat the Legislature somewhat cynically in terms of using it to produce yet another Liberal commercial.

This program, of course, is not news. It is a rehash and a retelling of an existing program in order to keep the Liberal press machine going. Perhaps the minister could be as punctual in asking his colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) to get out applications for the farm tax rebate program as he is in

reminding members to remind others of his own programs.

This is a rehash of an existing program. It comes from a minister who is somewhat embarrassed about the speech from the throne that the government produced last week, a throne speech that offered nothing new to farmers who are facing some of the most severe economic conditions they have faced since the Great Depression. What does he offer as a solution? He will move his ministry to Guelph.

Perhaps that is helpful to the local member, whose accoutrements today are fading from red to some other colour, perhaps in contrast to the redness of his face. Although this movement of the ministry from Toronto to Guelph fulfils a dream, no doubt spawned in the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to create a Cornell of the north, it certainly takes away from a very important facet of that ministry's function; that is, the interface between urban and rural people. That interface now will be sheltered in a smaller community. It is removed from the business sector. It comes at a very bad time. It could not come at a worse time for him, his government and the agricultural producers of this province.

Mr. Villeneuve: I too want to reply to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program is a very important program to agriculture. Why is it that in certain instances farmers are denied rebates on interest rates just because they happen to do a capital expenditure on their houses? I have had a number of farmers come to me and say, "Because some money was spent on my house, that particular portion of the interest rate is not being allowed."

I think it is very unfair to the farmers of Ontario. It is calling them second-class citizens because they effected needed repairs to their homes, which were part of their family farms. A billion dollars of federal money came to the coffers of farmers in Canada through the federal government. Some of it came to Ontario.

Never has agriculture faced such a difficult time. We have never had the United States farm bill to face. We do not know what the repercussions and ramifications of that US farm bill will be.

Farmers are putting in a grain crop right now. They are just reducing their losses. We are not talking profit, we are talking reducing losses; and the minister moves his ministry—his kingdom—to Guelph. I must ask the minister to think about agriculture. It is the most important sector of Ontario's economy. It directly and indirectly

affects some 25 per cent of the population in the province. When farmers have money, they spend it. Whenever they are really facing a very bleak situation, as they are with the crop going in right now, much more must be done for agriculture.

BUDGET

Mr. McClellan: I would like to reply briefly to the statement of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) that the budget will be delivered on Wednesday, May 20. I am sure most members have noticed the level of petulance from the government over the course of the last week, and I just wanted to make sure it was clear on the record that standing order 46 is a mandatory requirement that the throne speech debate be concluded before the Treasurer brings in his budget. So it is, and was, necessary for the Treasurer to negotiate with the other parties and come to an amicable solution.

1400

The reason the government got itself into this jackpot in the first place was that we were supposed to come back on April 21 and have enough time for a throne speech debate and the presentation of the budget in early May; but the Premier (Mr. Peterson) wanted to go somewhere so he could get a nice tan and we did not come back until April 28. That is why things got all bunched up together.

But I am sure all members are grateful that the spirit of conciliation and compromise has prevailed yet again, that minority government continues to work successfully and that we will give our unanimous consent to the Treasurer to deliver his budget on May 20.

ONTARIO FAMILY FARM INTEREST RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM

Mr. Hayes: I want to respond to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell). I want to thank him for giving us that valuable information. But I must say I am very disappointed that the minister has not got up in this House now and let us know he is going to make improvements to or amend the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program. It is very unfortunate that many farmers have to take off-farm jobs to supplement and keep their farms going. Now, today, these people are being told, "Sorry, your farm is not viable, will not feed a family; therefore, you are disqualified."

I see the trend here. If this government keeps going the way it is with some of these programs and making the criteria so hard for many farmers to meet, the trend of going for larger and less

farms in this province and across this country is going to go that much faster.

Many of these people have been very good managers. They have been efficient and productive. In many cases, through no fault of their own, because of low commodity prices, high interest rates and what have you, these people find themselves in a position where they need financial assistance from this government and too many of them are being disqualified.

I hope the Minister of Agriculture and Food will take a very serious look at this and amend the OFFIRR program so all farmers who are in need will get the financial assistance that is required to make them viable again.

MEMBER FOR KENORA

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, before you call the next order, I wonder if we might have unanimous consent for the honourable members to respond to the statement made in Kenora by the honourable member for that area?

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I was tempted to raise the matter yesterday, but the honourable member had not returned from northwestern Ontario.

I think the responses by political leaders and others are a clear indication of the high regard in which the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) is held by members on all sides of the House.

From my particular position, I suppose I can be particularly frank, as I can recall his first campaign, which was not as successful as his latter ones. In the good old days when the members of the Legislature were invited by the then Minister of Natural Resources—or Lands and Forests, as I think the name of the ministry was—to tour the north with the ministers and the Premier of the day himself, we had an opportunity to go through the town of Hudson.

In those days, under Tory rule, the main street was not even paved, and across the main street there was a very large banner, with the member for Kenora holding on to the string, saying, I think, "Premier and Members of the Legislature, Hudson Needs Housing."

That was really my first introduction to the member from the north who has served so well during these many years. It was a little hard to get annoyed with him even during the time when he had, more or less, an undedicated northern budget that could be distributed from the back of one of the planes as he flew across the territory, but it was a very impressive example for the democratic process.

Having said that, I do not think I would find very many taxpayers or people in the north who have not expressed publicly and privately their admiration for the honourable member's ability, his motives and his astuteness when it comes to politics but more than anything else the high regard with which he is held by members on all sides.

I do not want him to reconsider his decision, but I wish him well. Now that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) have negotiated an input in the naming of senators and judges and the like, we would be glad to talk to the honourable member and even the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) if he is over here on business from time to time selling us tickets.

Mr. Martel: I recall just about 21 years ago going to Kenora, long before I considered entering this place, to fight in a by-election against the "king of the north." I have to say he out-New-Democratted us up there. I mean he made us look like absolute pikers in what the Tory government was doing to the people of that part of the province. I guess he has been trying to make up for it ever since. I recall that week and a half up there well.

The member for Kenora and I were known to have our differences, but one of the things I appreciated was a major debate we once had over the dinner hour; he left, he was Minister of Mines at the time, and I was sitting with Stephen Lewis, and he came back in at eight o'clock and he said, "I have ordered a royal commission to look into the health and safety of workers in the province." I want to say to the workers of the province, we are not there yet, but it was a significant step forward. I think the member for Kenora will be fondly remembered for that royal commission and ultimately the legislation that finally gave workers some protection.

We all have high regard but, like my friend, we do not want to coax him back, do we? I mean there are all kinds of people leaving this place and we do not want to urge them back.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martel: It is always the member's friends he has to watch, not his enemies.

I want to join with my friend from across the way, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk and other sundry places, in wishing our friend well in the years ahead.

Mr. F. S. Miller: As one of those who, like the member for whatever area our buddy comes from, is leaving this place, I want to join with the others in talking about the member for Kenora.

I came after him. Most of us came after him. He seems to have been here for ever and yet he is so young. He is younger than me. Any of us who dared get into the north as ministers quickly learned it was the member's preserve. I recall going there on May 30, 1974, when I was a brand-new minister and he sent me to Atikokan. Before the morning was over, they had a new hospital. My staff quietly told me I had no such authority as a minister to make a new hospital, which the member told me they needed, but they got it anyway. One learned that the member always got ministers to the points where they needed to be whenever a decision—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: More success with that than closing hospitals.

Mr. F. S. Miller: Yes. The member, as Treasurer, would have enjoyed having him as Minister of Northern Affairs. Where he managed to get the money to do the things he did, I will never know. I did not even know there was a program for nursing home beds in the north until, by mistake, he came before Management Board one day on the rare occasion when I was there—

An hon. member: To look for more.

Mr. F. S. Miller: To look for more. Absolutely. One went by Minaki from time to time.

Interjections.

Mr. F. S. Miller: I think it was May 30, 1974, when he took eight or 10 ministers to Minaki and convinced us all of the rightness of that decision. He convinced us we should build new roads all around Kenora and to Minaki and taught us how to fish in the English-Wabigoon river system.

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His annual picnic was, I guess, the biggest event in the north. In Toronto, in southern Ontario or even in Muskoka, people will consider driving 30 minutes to an event. When they go to the member for Kenora's picnic, they have driven from Thunder Bay and back the same afternoon. They have driven from all over the place; one person said five hours. He got more members, more municipal politicians and more people out to his picnics than anyone I ever saw. I believe I won the horseshoe pitching contest one year at that event.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: That is not what you were pitching.

Mr. F. S. Miller: I was pitching horseshoes then. I did not become Minister of Natural Resources until later.

The fact is that the member for Kenora, both physically and politically, towered over the north. He was in every part of the north. Every riding in the north looked towards him for guidance and for respect, and in large measure the north owed a great debt to him personally for his interest in the north and for the wellbeing he brought to it.

We on our side love him. As somebody said, "He isn't a Leo; he's a pussycat."

Mr. Bernier: Thank you very much. If I may, I will first express my appreciation to the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk, the member for Sudbury East, the member for Muskoka and all the members of the House for their kind words and kind expressions.

I have to admit I really never thought this day would ever come. I never looked forward to it. I have to tell you the decision was one of the most difficult decisions I have ever made in my life, because the work here, the friends I have made, the challenges and the satisfying results of being a member of this Legislature are things that go through your mind when you have to make that decision.

Marj and I spent literally months and weeks thinking about it. We looked at all aspects of it. I think there comes a time in each of our lives when we say to ourselves, "The time really has come to move on, to look for a different career." Because of the distance I have had to travel over the last 21 years, I want to spend a little more time with Marj in northern Ontario. I certainly intend, when the day comes, to live in northern Ontario; it has been home for me and my family. I have enjoyed doing all the things I was able to do.

I want to say how honoured I was, not only to work in this Legislature but also to be under the leadership of great statesmen such as Premier John Robarts, Bill Davis, the member for Muskoka and now working with our leader, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman). I can tell you that, from my point of view, it has been an experience I will never forget. It has been satisfying and, I think, most rewarding.

I would have to admit the great speeches—and I can well recall coming into the Legislature back in 1966 when the member for Sudbury East was up in the by-election—and he left early; he did not tell you that, but he gave up the sponge. He said there was no way we could beat this guy. He went back home to Sudbury; he left early. Does he remember that? Anyway, we were successful, after I guess 15 years in the political wilderness in that riding; it was the domain of the Liberal-

Labour Party, Albert Wren and Bob Gibson, who are well known to the Treasurer.

To come into the Legislature with really no experience in political life of this nature and to recall the speeches of Farquhar Oliver, who I think the Treasurer will agree with me was a great orator, and then to listen to the late Elmer Sopha—the Treasurer will remember those great speeches he used to make about wolves. He made two speeches in the Legislature: one on wolves and, later on in the session, he would remake the Ontario cabinet. Those were two great moments in this Legislature in those days. Every member of the Legislature would show up for Elmer Sopha's speeches on those two subjects. They were humorous and colourful. He would stand in his place and make up the language. I am sure the Hansard girls did not even know some of the words he was saying, but he would spell out the words to the Hansard girls to make sure they got his phrases right. It was absolutely unreal.

Then to be around for the orators in our own party—I recall Bobby Welch, a great winder-upper of the throne debate or the budget debate, who would have everyone in stitches. He would have that side, because we were on that side for a long time, up and supporting him on every word.

The 21 years is something I will remember for a long time. I said to the press that one of the proudest moments I was given was to work with my colleagues René Brunelle, the late John Rhodes and the member for Algoma-Manitoulin (Mr. Lane) to set up the Ministry of Northern Affairs, a ministry that would have sole and unique responsibility for the vast area of this province I love so well, for which I fought so hard over those years. To see that pulled into reality, to sit with those gentlemen and work out terms of reference was an experience I will never forget. I will cherish that for a long time.

The 21 years have gone by relatively fast. It is hard to believe I have been around for 21 years. I am sure the member for Elgin (Mr. McNeil) will know they go by very fast. Certainly, the friendships and the camaraderie that exist in this great hall are things that are cherished by all. I have to say with sincerity that I will miss this House. I will miss standing in my place and being part of the process. It has been a great 21 years, and I thank you for your friendliness and your advice.

Mr. Speaker: Now we will continue with routine procedures in an orderly fashion.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: I am sure the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) will think about those

kinds words during the remaining two years in his term of office in this Legislature.

My question is to the Premier. Yesterday, we were discussing the serious questions relating to the accord reached last Thursday at Meech Lake. I wonder if today he might be able to share with us his understanding of just how the immigration part of that agreement will be implemented, particularly whether that provision will restrict who can settle in certain provinces on the basis of language or any other criteria.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My understanding of it goes as follows. The member knows that Quebec has had a special relationship with the federal government with respect to immigration, codified in a document called the Cullen-Couture agreement, that allowed Quebec to make a certain input with respect to immigration into that province. Obviously, the reason for that was the fact that Quebec did worry about assimilation at some point in the future. The theoretical possibility, and it is completely theoretical, is that five million anglophone immigrants could come into Quebec and swamp that province, so Quebec arranged certain controls and an accord with the federal government.

As a result of this constitutional amendment, that will now be constitutionalized. Although it does not set the overall quotas and it has to fit inside the overall federal immigration policy, it allows people to make their quotas with respect to francophones and French-speaking people. I am told that agreement works extremely well; it in no way restricts mobility inside the country. As I recall one of the questions the member raised yesterday, it does not prevent someone from moving to Quebec, to Ontario or back and forth and that kind of thing but only assists at the original stage in settling those new immigrants into the country.

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The second point I will make is that this agreement will be constitutionalized. There is nothing new there. What has been operating and practised for several years will just become part of the Constitution. If in fact another province wanted to do the same kind of thing with the federal government, that could be constitutionalized as well. I should tell the honourable member, to the best of my knowledge I am not aware of any other province that wants to go into that kind of agreement at the present time, but it is a theoretical possibility and could be contemplated under the Constitution; so everyone would have equal treatment.

Mr. Grossman: It appears that the immigration provision is a fairly important one to Quebec. I must say it is new information to this House. I should just like the Premier to confirm with a supplementary that it is his understanding and the basis upon which he entered into the accord that this adds nothing new to Quebec's immigration authorities or procedures, save for the five per cent addition, than was already the case prior to Meech Lake last Thursday. Is it the Premier's view that it does nothing but codify the current state of affairs?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I said, in practical terms, this accord had been worked out over some period of time and was in fact happening. As I understand it, in practical terms, there is nothing new being added here except that it will be constitutionalized.

Mr. Grossman: Given the reactions of Quebec, at least from the distance—and I will admit it is a distance—we have observed them, and given the degree of importance in which it has held up the immigration breakthrough, as many have called it, the Premier will understand our concern at this stage that he has an interpretation which seems somewhat at variance with the interpretation of the impact of the new immigration agreement being understood in Quebec.

Given that and given the various other questions that have been raised in this House by the opposition here and in the federal House by the Liberal and New Democratic Party opposition there, I wonder if the Premier would agree today, in the spirit of openness and consultation, that prior to the signing of the final accord he might make appropriate arrangements, together with the House leaders in the other two parties, to ensure that there is an opportunity for public input and discussion in front of a committee of the Legislature, say for one week, prior to the signing of that agreement. I think that would be helpful to the process, allow all of us to understand it better and certainly allow a lot of groups that might have some comments on this to participate in the process in a free and democratic way. Would the Premier give that undertaking today?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: First of all, may I say the Leader of the Opposition has every right to raise these questions and interpretations. As he knows, others have their own interpretations of this matter. Indeed, the experts are looking at it and the fine print as it develops—people such as Senator Eugene Forsey and other acknowledged

constitutional experts, who are giving their interpretations.

Being a lawyer, the honourable member will be aware that when we put our intentions into words, they will be interpreted by courts at various times in the future, depending on the longevity of this Constitution, and constitutions tend to last a fairly long time. I am anxious to get his advice and any concerns he has. I can tell the honourable member that the concerns he expressed yesterday and today were discussed by the first ministers. Indeed, we had advice from a number of our advisers, and there was a great array of constitutional experts assembled from all across the country. All of us had advice on those particular matters and drew the conclusions that I am sharing with my honourable friend opposite.

As he knows, it is our intention to have a major debate in this House with respect to any changes in the Constitution, and that will be an opportunity that obviously the House will speak on—and I hope all members will take the opportunity to participate and share their views—on the new accord. I suspect that is an appropriate way to move on the matter at this time. I certainly want the advice of the member opposite and I want to sort of quell any fears he may have about the situation.

I did ask the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), on Thursday night last, to phone the member and the leader of the third party to make sure they knew what we were doing at all times. I tell my friend opposite that this is a matter for every member of this Legislature. It is not a partisan issue. I want to share every piece of information we have with them. I will share the drafts as they come through, and anything that is negotiated, and get their advice on them. I would hope we would have an opportunity to debate this collectively in this House as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Grossman: The bottom line is that the Premier will not undertake to allow the public to participate in this discussion through a committee of the Legislature. We disagree with that point of view. We think this is such an important document for the people that the experts and others should have an opportunity to come in and speak on this issue—

Mr. Speaker: New question.

Mr. Grossman: —before this parliament is asked to vote on it and before the Premier signs the agreement. He and I disagree on that.

TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

Mr. Grossman: My second question is for the Premier on the freer trade issue. He has had a lot

to say about the freer trade issue, including a passing nod in the throne speech. After the extensive work the Premier and his people are alleged to have done, I wonder whether today the Premier might be able to tell us precisely what sectors in Ontario might stand to benefit a great deal from a freer trade arrangement with the Americans.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: It obviously depends on what the honourable member is talking about by freer trade. Is he talking about a completely open border? Is he talking about some limited access? Is he talking about some new devices to control things that previously have been controlled by contingency protection? I will give him a theoretical example. The steel industry would probably do better. As he knows, our steel industry is quite competitive. It has been existing under a number of, shall we say, self-imposed quotas and monitoring over the last period of time, so presumably the steel industry would do better.

We have done work on a variety of industries and we could share that information, industry by industry, with the honourable member. Some would probably do less well. It really depends on what set of operating premises he is using. We do not have any fix from the federal government on what operating premises it is using. The big sawoffs and the big tradeoffs have not been established at this point. There has been lots of discussion about the details, but at this point we still do not know what Ambassador Reisman has in mind, what he really wants and what he is prepared to give up.

Mr. Grossman: I must say I am a little mystified by that. The Premier and his government are getting regular briefings on the freer trade negotiations. Simon Reisman is quite available to the Premier's officials in terms of continuing dialogue, as the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) has pointed out to us on many occasions. There was the famous leaked memo reflecting the views of one of the not most senior people, let us say, in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology indicating ongoing dialogue. The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) and his people have had extensive discussions and briefings sector by sector in the agricultural industry on a regular basis, monthly if not weekly, with the federal officials. It is inconceivable that after this long period of time the Premier should be contradicting the evidence given by his own colleagues and the firm position taken by the federal negotiators, the ministers, Mr. Hockin,

Mr. Reisman and others, that Ontario and all the provinces have been kept fully informed of all the operating premises to this date.

Given all that, the Premier said in his first response that he could share the information with us. I know he has talked significantly on this issue.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Grossman: I wonder whether right now, in response to this question, he can share with us perhaps five or six other sectors such as steel that could benefit dramatically from a freer trade arrangement.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As I told my friend, it depends on the set of operating premises. He quotes some of the experts on it. To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Hockin has not been involved in this at all. A different set of cabinet ministers is responsible for this. I know he spoke at the member's own seminar on this matter, but he has not been a major player in this discussion.

There have been lots of discussions back and forth about positions and various views on various subjects, but I repeat to my friend that the overall shape of this deal has not been put forward. I know the various hopes and aspirations of some of the players. It is not unlike a constitutional deal. I know what some of the people wanted going in, but the question is what comes out at the other end. We also do not know what will wash in the United States.

I take the member's example of steel. I would love to see more access to the United States for steel, but what if Senator Heinz, for example, who runs the steel caucus in the US, mounts some kind of lobby and that is excluded from the deal? My friend does not know that and I do not know that and Ambassador Reisman does not know that. It has to wash through a number of levels, not only the administrative level but also the congressional level et al. I assume the negotiators, Mr. Murphy and Ambassador Reisman, are going to be putting forward a deal they think they can sell.

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Mr. Grossman: May I remind the Premier that the first time he heard Senator Heinz's name was when we raised it in the House and asked him what action he was taking with regard to the Heinz legislation. He did not even know what sector we were talking about, let alone who Senator Heinz was.

Consistent with that, the Premier has told this House today that he knows hardly anything about the status of negotiations. That dramatically

contradicts all the information available from the federal government with regard to the degree of sharing of information that has gone on between the federal and provincial governments.

Therefore, my question to the Premier is, if he cannot today, after two years of this debate, lay out for us his understanding of the sectors that may be winners in a freer trade negotiation; and if he today, after two years of discussions, does not know what are the operating premises—his term—of the federal negotiations, will he undertake today to put in the appropriate phone call or arrange the appropriate meeting with the federal officials who have said many times they are more than willing to share that information with him, so that he can finally get off the fence and become an active participant on behalf of the people of Ontario in fighting for a good freer trade arrangement for the people of Ontario? Will he make those arrangements?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I want to try to be helpful in this debate. My honourable friend stands in this House and takes credit for introducing the name of Senator Heinz to me and to this Legislature. I guess he is not informed of the fact that I had met with Senator Heinz a year before my friend even mentioned his name. We met in Washington. I use that as an example of my honourable friend's lack of information with respect to this particular discussion.

I am sure my friend saw the interview quite recently with Premier Bourassa on this issue, knowing how closely he follows the media. His reaction was very similar to mine. As he said, and as I say, we have not seen any documentation on the shape of the final deal. Indeed, it may be only a gleam in Ambassador Reisman's eye.

Who knows what will wash with Mr. Murphy? We are happy to share that information with the member as it progresses, just as I am happy that he is sharing his view with me. I have been tracking his view on this subject for the last several years and it has changed almost as many times as some people change shoes.

BUDGET

Mr. Laughren: I have a question of the Treasurer. I know he would not want to reveal any specifics in his forthcoming budget, but what we are seeking are some commitments in principle.

The Treasurer may recall that about a year ago he stated: "I wish the tax reduction program could have been richer. I wish it could have been more, but in my judgement that was what we could afford at this time."

Now the Treasurer has more money in his pocket. At the same time, a family of four at the poverty level, as established by Statistics Canada, of around \$21,700 has just paid approximately \$909 to the Ontario Treasury, not to mention \$1,800 to the federal Treasury.

In view of the fact that a single person earning the minimum wage in Ontario continues to pay taxes of \$262 to the provincial Treasury and \$532 to the federal Treasury, would the Treasurer make a commitment to put his money where his mouth was a year ago and, in the interest of fairness, relieve Ontario's 300,000 working poor from paying taxes in the province?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I appreciate the advice from the honourable member, who is the newly-named budget critic of the New Democratic Party. He was good enough to send me an annotated copy of his press release from a few days ago, which was also appreciated.

I am sure he is aware—and actually his comments reflect that he is—that in both budgets of the Liberal government we have put substantial funds—although we would both agree not enough money—in the tax reduction program that removed from the tax rolls for personal income tax many thousands of the working people in Ontario.

I simply ask the supporters of the Progressive Conservative Party to compare that with the initiative at the federal level, which was just the opposite. The honourable leader has tried to defend the situation involving the decisions taken in Ottawa at the federal level where the tax reduction program was moved in the opposite direction, while a \$500,000 exemption for capital gains was added to the top.

We have also taken the initiative of adding a three per cent surtax on incomes over \$50,000. Once again, we feel this is an appropriate initiative, which was part of the expansion of the revenue base the honourable member was good enough to support at the time it was before the Legislature, and I certainly am cognizant of that.

Mr. Laughren: If I can continue on the theme of fairness in taxation in Ontario, the Treasurer might know, if I can be very specific for the moment, that a home at 209 Carlton Street in the city of Toronto was bought in June 1986 for \$360,000 and in March 1987 was sold for \$465,000, for a profit of \$105,000 on which no tax was paid. At a second location at 228 De Grassi Street, a home was bought in the spring of 1986 for \$124,000 and in the winter of 1987 sold for \$167,500, for a profit of \$43,500 on which no tax was paid.

To use that same \$43,500 on which no tax was paid on a house sale, a family of four with an income of that same amount of money would pay taxes in total, provincially \$3,300 and federally \$6,800, for over \$10,000 in taxes. Does the Treasurer think that is fair and why does he think that a tax on the speculation and the flipping of homes is so unworkable?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I gather that is applause for the well-known efficient research department of the New Democratic Party and there is no doubt this is right on the money, so to speak.

The honourable member will know there has been a tremendous escalation in the price of housing; not just in Toronto, I expect it would be in Sudbury. I went to New Liskeard and found it there. In South Dumfries, the price of homes has escalated at almost the same rate; in Brantford, Windsor, any place in the province or, as a matter of fact, in Canada or North America. If the honourable member has had an opportunity to travel abroad, then he is aware the same thing is happening under those circumstances. This is not precisely a phenomenon that is restricted to Ontario.

So far, the Income Tax Act of Canada, which we in Ontario parallel very closely, does not levy a capital gains tax on the sale of a person's home. The so-called speculation tax that was brought in, in circumstances where the economy was just as heated some years ago, was tried by the previous government with not much success. As a matter of fact, there was so much criticism of it that there was a royal commission investigating certain exemptions that were made. I remember the royal commission very well since I was a witness before it, having been one of the principal critics of the decisions taken at the time.

I am not interested in getting involved in such a mishmash as that. It appears that the market is starting to correct itself and we are watching it very closely.

Mr. Laughren: I remind the Treasurer that we are not talking about inflationary prices. We are talking about speculation on the sale of homes where people hold them for one or two months and in some cases sell before the deal is even closed; so the Treasurer is talking through his hat, so to speak.

I was glad to hear the Treasurer comment on the minimum personal income tax that has been established by the federal regime. Can the Treasurer tell me if he thinks it is appropriate that in Ontario, the last time we checked, there were about 40,000 corporations that had book profits but paid absolutely no corporation income taxes?

Does the Treasurer think that is fair? Will he introduce some kind of minimum corporate tax, which he supports so readily at the personal level but so far has not come to that position with corporations? Why will he not do that?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I know the member is aware that we also have a capital tax payable in Ontario, which means that most corporations have to make at least some contribution to the revenues on that basis. If they do not have a profit upon which the tax can be levied, then we are not in a position to apply a tax.

The idea that the honourable member has put forward for a minimum corporation tax is a very interesting one. It is not good, but it is an interesting one. I would say that it is also not new. I do not want to dismiss it out of hand because maybe this is something that should be done in the future, and while we have the extra week to contemplate our budgetary decisions, I can assure him that all these matters are under some consideration.

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Mr. Rowe: Have you bought your new Guccis yet?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am going to get some used ones from Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Premier. The Premier brought in a speech from the throne recently that was the longest I have seen in the eight years I have been here. At a time when there is a billion-dollar windfall in profits for the Treasury of the province, somehow he did not mention those people who have been left out of the prosperity of Peterson's Ontario.

The only allusion to people on social assistance is that he is going to wait for the Social Assistance Review Committee to report. We know that the report will probably not be written until late fall, that it will probably not be in his hands in printed form until the end of the year and that we are not going to see legislation to change things significantly for probably another year, given that we have to have more public input when it gets to this level.

Why is it that there was no mention of food banks? Why is it, out of all the promises that were made in that throne speech, that there was no mention of things the government was going to do specifically for people on social assistance this year, now?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The member answered his own question in his own preamble.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I presume the Premier is telling me that people can wait two years and, in the meantime, those people who are living in poverty and going to food banks should depend on them.

I am going to send over to the Premier some statistics which, as he knows, I gather out of the welfare statistics for Ontario, which this government still does not publish on a regular basis. Does he realize that over the last five years, the employables on welfare in Ottawa have gone up 132 per cent? In Toronto it is 94 per cent, in Sault Ste. Marie it is 173 per cent and in Thunder Bay it is 108 per cent. It has not got better since he has been in government.

Of the 14 municipalities I survey, only four have gone down. In Metropolitan Toronto alone there are now 5,000 more cases this March than there were last March.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Why was there no program announced in the speech from the throne for direct programs to assist those people who want employment to get employment?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I need not remind my honourable friend that we are now enjoying the lowest unemployment rate in the country. I believe some 200,000 jobs have been created in the last couple of years in Ontario. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) tells me I am right.

We recognize that there are still people in need of social assistance, and the member's point is quite right in that regard. One of the phenomena I am sure he will be aware of is the massive migration into Ontario in the last little while. There are people coming here to find jobs, to find employment, and, of course, we welcome them and work with them.

I say to my honourable friend that I think we are dealing with these things in an evenhanded way. As he knows, we are looking thoroughly at the entire system and hope to be back much quicker. If my friend moves things a little faster in this House and does not delay and indulge in obstructionist tactics, we can move much quicker on these things.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a preposterous notion—because the Premier announced nothing in the throne speech—that any tactics we might have may delay something that he is not planning anyhow.

There is a real question of fairness in terms of the way he has meted out his pot-pourri of

promises in this throne speech while ignoring the poorest and probably the least politically influential people in this province. How does he consider it fair that over the last two years, by his minister's own admission, the increases in social assistance have essentially amounted to less than \$40 per beneficiary in Ontario? At the same time, he has robbed, stolen, from Canada pension plan disability people this January and taken back federal government money that was rightfully theirs. When is he going to make this a priority?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not agree with my honourable friend. My friend attacks us, on the one hand, for addressing too many problems in the throne speech and, on the other hand, for not doing enough. But if he looks at the thrust of the throne speech, the things we are doing with respect to the disabled, the elderly and others, and looks at the budget that will be coming forward, I think he will see a very compassionate government that is dealing with these problems in a very significant way, underneath an umbrella of fiscal health of the province, that is working with people to retrain them to get them jobs, working into our system. I think if he would take the sum total of those programs, he would see not only one of the most effective but also one of the most compassionate governments in this country today.

TECHNOLOGY FUND

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Attorney General regarding the Exploracom mess and the victims of that mess, the 43 former employees.

The Attorney General will remember that it is about one year ago now that the Premier (Mr. Peterson) sent a letter to Mr. Schwartz announcing the funding for this project, a letter which makes no mention whatsoever of conditionality, but leaving rather the implication that the money would flow regardless of the performance of the project.

I have sent the Attorney General a copy of a letter that Mr. Marshall in his office has sent to the former employees' lawyer. I quote from that letter. Mr. Marshall says, "I attempted to explain to you that Mr. Schwartz's conduct and, in particular, what representations he made to each employee in light of his specific knowledge seemed to be matters of some significance."

The clear implication of this letter is that the Attorney General's office is saying Mr. Schwartz misled the former employees and that in fact he had firsthand knowledge of conditions being put on that \$17.5-million grant. If that is the position of the Ministry of the Attorney General, would

he care to tell the House what evidence he has of that accusation?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I do not read the letter in the way my honourable friend reads it. I do not draw the conclusion from it that he draws and I do not think anybody else would.

Mr. Gillies: The Attorney General is dead wrong because that is exactly the way the former employees are reading it. In the news conference they had yesterday, they were saying that, in effect, the government will not talk to them about any sort of reasonable settlement for the disruption that he caused their lives. Two of those 43 families are now on welfare. I quote from their release, "The litigation required to straighten this matter out is going to cost taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars, it is going to force the former employees to seek legal aid and it will allow David Peterson to evade accountability by hiding behind the courts."

In view of the fact that the settlement requested by these people seems, to any casual observer, to be fair and modest, why should the Attorney General not avoid all kinds of expensive litigation on the part of those people, who have already had a lot of disruption caused in their lives, and offer them some sort of reasonable settlement?

Hon. Mr. Scott: The first thing the member overlooks, because it does not suit the case he proposes to make out of this plot, is paragraph 3, in which a senior counsel in my ministry concludes there is no liability on the part of the government as the result of the Exploracom affair. He says, "I advised you that I have not completed my investigations but that I was of the view that no liability could be based on some generalized claim couched in vague terms such as you repeat in your present letter."

He then goes on to explain that if the employees of Exploracom or Mr. Schwartz want to advance more particulars of their claim, he will be glad to receive it and form an opinion based on that.

In my respectful view, that is precisely how counsel to any party in litigation is expected to behave. Frankly, I am quite satisfied with the position Mr. Marshall has taken in this case.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question of the Premier. The Premier will be aware that on May 31, this month, a total of 1,557 Goodyear Canada tire workers will lose their jobs. The tragedy is compounded by the fact that a group of 300 of those workers will not get the benefits of reforms

to the Pension Benefits Act unless some action is taken by the government.

I am appealing to the Premier to review with his minister the possibility of using the example of the rent review legislation—where the government gave an effective date of August 1985, even though it was not passed until the fall of 1986—and proclaiming an effective date for the legislation as of May 15, 1987, so this group of 300 Goodyear workers get the benefits of pensions upon the loss of their jobs.

1450

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the honourable member's question and his advice on this matter. My understanding is that the minister responsible for pensions is looking into this matter, and I will certainly discuss the member's suggestion with him.

Mr. McClellan: Further to that, I would ask the Premier if he and the minister would take this matter to cabinet as quickly as possible and issue a statement of government policy setting the effective date clearly in public in advance of May 31 and instruct the Pension Commission of Ontario to make sure that Goodyear does not run off with the pension funds and that the money is available to pay the 300 workers.

We will try to schedule passage of the bill as quickly as possible and have already eliminated the committee stage in the general committee, so we have only committee of the whole to do here in the House. I ask the Premier, in the light of that, to make a commitment now to report back to the House as quickly as possible with a decision on this matter.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I appreciate the member's constructive view with respect to the movement of legislation through this House and, again, I will take up his constructive idea with the minister responsible. I understand the minister is looking at it, and we will see if there is anything we can do with regard to the member's suggestion.

POLICE INVESTIGATION

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Attorney General. In early April, Detective Inspector Ron Collins of the Ontario Provincial Police told a Toronto newspaper—this was before the investigation into the Vaughan land sale was complete—that the report was going to be sent not to a crown attorney but to the Attorney General of the province.

That point of view is the same point of view as that of the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) given in this House last Thursday and again yesterday. It

is in direct variance with what the Attorney General told the House yesterday as to the process to be used. It is obvious the minister has injected himself into the process of deciding whether criminal charges will be laid in the Vaughan land sale. Will he tell us where that report is and why the laying of criminal charges is being held up?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As I understand the matter, notwithstanding every effort to inject innuendo into it, the OPP is conducting an investigation. I have not had any contact with them at all. When the investigation is complete and meets their standards, I have no doubt they will deliver the report in the normal way.

Mr. Pope: There is no innuendo. I am quoting directly from Inspector Collins. He made the statement—I did not—that they would be reporting to the Attorney General. It is not a decision that is being made in the normal course. It is not the normal course for the Attorney General to be handed OPP reports personally before charges are laid. The minister himself said that yesterday. Obviously, he is involved in this process.

We have a right to know. This is public knowledge; that statement of Inspector Collins is public knowledge. The police are publicly saying that the Attorney General is going to be involved in making a decision on a matter involving members of his own party. Where is that report and when are the charges going to be laid?

Hon. Mr. Scott: We have been through this before. The government invited the OPP to make an investigation. Indeed, I believe the investigation was requested by my honourable friend, among others. The OPP is making that investigation and, as far as my office is concerned, the OPP is not being interfered with or impeded. Indeed, we are not entering into any communication with them at all on the subject. When they make a report to the chief law officer of the crown, we will determine to what extent we should report to the House, if it is a public matter, or to what extent the matter should proceed in the courts.

WATER QUALITY

Mrs. Grier: Last Thursday, I asked the Minister of the Environment about the lack of drinking water standards in this province and received in reply not an answer but a rather wordy description of the world-class monitoring programs that his ministry was conducting. The minister will know that the more you monitor, the more you find. In Metropolitan Toronto, we are finding such things in the treated drinking

water as toluene, dichlorobenzenes and methylene chloride. Can the minister explain why he has not used the results of his monitoring programs to develop standards for drinking water in this province that are legally enforceable?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I think the member will know that with the program we have that I described to her—as she said in a lengthy sense last Thursday; I thought I was just trying to be comprehensive in my reply—I described the very extensive program of surveillance of water supplies in Ontario, an ever-expanding program that gathers together the results. We will continue to report as we gather this information together. By and large, they have indicated that the drinking water in Ontario is of good quality. I indicated to the member that we always want to improve that. Along with the federal government, we utilize that information to look at guidelines and eventually standards that can be utilized.

I guess I have concentrated most of my effort on ensuring that we get at some of the sources of pollution to ensure that the raw water supply we draw from is of high quality. In addition, the member will be aware that we have a plant optimization program under way at the present time in various municipalities where we are looking at the plants that are there now to see how well they are operated in terms of the training that takes place for the employees, the specific equipment that is used and the processes that are used. I can say that it is always improving the water quality in this province. I am pleased to have the member's support in that regard.

Mrs. Grier: I had a feeling the minister might refer to sources. While obviously his concern about sources is commendable, I am sure the minister, with all his knowledge and experience, knows that the sources of drinking water in this province are not only sources in Ontario; there is the possibility of spills and there are sources in the United States.

Prior to the last election, the minister and his leader both responded to an environmental questionnaire by saying they supported the establishment of safe drinking water legislation. He is now talking about standards eventually. Can the minister perhaps answer very directly whether he intends to introduce safe drinking water standards in this session of the Legislature?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As to making that determination, I am not aware how long this session of the Legislature will last. I have a note here that reminds me that we have a Public Interest Liaison Committee on Drinking Water

Issues that is giving advice and developing that process to set the standards. I think that is a significant step forward in the development of those standards.

I want to indicate to the member as well that we are certainly moving in that direction. The number of initiatives we are undertaking as a ministry is extremely significant. It is difficult to move as quickly as we would like on all fronts, but I can tell the member that with this Public Interest Liaison Committee on Drinking Water Issues and the other initiatives we are taking, we are working towards improving the quality of the water and attempting to set those standards.

I do not like saying this because it sounds like one is bragging it up, but the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt) will tell the member that he often said that when you compare the drinking water in this province with that in other jurisdictions, it is second to none in the world. I say it is of very good quality but we are always striving to improve it more significantly, moving in the direction the member is discussing.

ONTARIO LOTTERY CORP.

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. The government House leader agreed to postpone the introduction of Bill 115 for third reading last February to give the Minister of Tourism and Recreation time to reflect on the serious impact this bill will have on the lives of 1,000 Ontarians. Today, I would like to ask the Minister of Tourism and Recreation whether he took advantage of this opportunity to obtain a legal opinion from the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) on the validity of this proposed legislation that will affect so many people?

Hon. Mr. Eakins: Yes, we have taken the opportunity. It is my understanding that the Conservatives want to debate third reading of the bill. If that is so, we will be delighted to present all the information we have at that time.

1500

Mr. Rowe: I am pleased to learn that the minister has sought the advice of the Attorney General on the proposed legislation. Given that, to date, Bill 115 has already cost Ontario 80 jobs and \$20 million due to the reallocation of six Ontario firms to British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba, why has the minister not shared this important information with the members of the House? The people he is putting out of work have a right to know. Why has he not shared it with us?

Hon. Mr. Eakins: The credibility of the Ontario Lottery Corp. is most important. That is the reason we have Bill 115, to make sure that the

people of this province, through the Ontario Lottery Corp., are in charge of the lotteries of this province.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Education. It deals with the capital announcements that were made last week for the province as a whole and the individual capital allocations for each board of education.

Why was it announced by his ministry and, in particular, by the local member—I believe the member for Windsor-Sandwich (Mr. Wrye) made the official announcement for the Windsor Board of Education—that we would be getting \$1,012,000 in capital grants? The reality is that \$724,600 of that was already allocated because of the transfer of a high school from the public board to the separate board and another \$250,000 was allocated from the ministry equity reserve fund from the sale of a school site, for a total of \$974,000, so the net capital grant from the ministry was \$38,000.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Because I indicated some time ago in those regulations to which the honourable member made reference with respect to leasing and sharing of space, as was the case in Windsor where there were property transfers, that would be a credit to the next capital allocation. I did precisely what I said I would do.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I think the community has read this quite differently, and so do I. The ministry and the government have tried to make it look as though they are doing a lot more for capital in the education system than they really are doing. How many other boards of education and how much of his \$226 million has been covered with other boards in exactly the same way that he deceived the Windsor Board of Education in our community?

Mr. Laughren: Con man.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member withdraw the word “deceived”?

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Rather than argue, I will withdraw the word “deceived” and I will let the people of our community judge for themselves.

Mr. Speaker: You withdraw it? Fine. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I will be quite happy to supply the member with the information he has requested. There have been a number of school transfers under the provisions of the new regulations, and I will be quite happy to supply my friend from Windsor with that information.

I want to make it very clear that we have tried to be as even-handed as possible in the allocation of these funds. We have as well in this capital announcement very considerably improved the overall allocation. I regret my honourable colleague's feelings in this respect, but I want to say again that when the regulations were changed some months ago, I thought I had made it clear that there would be a credit to the capital allocation of the next year for any transfers that took place under the arrangements to which I made reference.

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: I have a question of the Minister of Revenue. When will he be releasing his ministry's study of the impact of market value assessment on property taxes in Metropolitan Toronto?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Very soon.

Mr. McFadden: I would like to ask the minister what he means by “soon.” By “soon,” does he also mean he will be releasing that study both to this House and to the general public for its perusal?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The report was requested by Metropolitan council. It will be up to them to decide its disposition. The report will be made available to them when it is available to us.

ROOMERS, BOARDERS AND LODGERS

Mr. Reville: I have a question for the Minister of Housing, to continue a conversation we were having earlier today at the Toronto regional International Year of Shelter for the Homeless workshop. I observed to the minister that one of the ways to reduce homelessness was to protect rooming house tenants. I raised this issue last week and I got a confused reply.

I want to tell the minister that since last week, another 20 roomers are facing eviction, those at 185 Carlton and 17 Homewood. I would like to ask the minister to answer the question clearly. Is he prepared to stand up for the roomers of Ontario and provide them with the protection that every other tenant has by supporting my private bill; and if not, will he then introduce a bill of his own that will bring roomers under the Landlord and Tenant Act before they are all gone?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I saw my honourable colleague at the workshop. I am glad he is participating in our International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

We are taking a tremendous amount of initiatives and seeing my colleague participating tells us they are in the right direction. One of the

efforts we are making is to address the problems of people who are roomers, boarders and lodgers who do not have any tenure and to make the public aware of this. The Lieutenant Governor announced in our throne speech that we will do all we can to protect those tenants who do not have tenure. The commitment is there, and we will follow through with it.

Mr. Reville: Those are brave words, but they will be of no comfort to the 160 people who reside in the area that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) seeks to represent. They will be evicted. Will the government now admit it has no intention of amending the Landlord and Tenant Act, but it is going to leave those roomers to be evicted without cause, day after day, in a city where speculation is rampant?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Lest the member did not understand, I will read from the throne speech again. We went further than that, actually, in that commitment. It said we "will introduce measures this session to improve conditions for roomers, boarders and lodgers." Not only are we going to protect them, but also we will build new supplies in order to accommodate those who will be faced with any action that will be taken.

BUDGET

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the Treasurer. The people in my riding of Brampton were very impressed with a lot of the promises in the throne speech. Being the new boy on the block, I would like to inquire of the Treasurer whether the effect of the opposition blocking the introduction of the budget until May 20 means that any or all the promises in the throne speech are blocked until then or for quite some time after that. Is there any way they can be introduced in the meantime?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I consider it my responsibility as Treasurer to indicate in the budget, whenever it is read, how we expect to fund the programs that are new and those that are old, and expanded programs that were referred to in the speech from the throne. I can assure my honourable friend that, even though there is this rather inconvenient delay that makes some people think the Legislature is not working as efficiently as it should, his constituents will not suffer because of the intransigence and obstructionist attitudes taken by the House leader of the New Democratic Party particularly.

1510

NURSING HOMES

Mr. Cousens: I have a question for the Minister of Health. He may be aware, or I hope

this question will make him aware, that there is a crisis in confidence in Richmond Hill on the nursing home needs of that community.

There are two nursing homes in Richmond Hill. The Mariann Home, which has a three-year waiting list and has had a request in for additional nursing home beds, is about to be sold and could be closed down. The second is Country Place Nursing Home. The ministry took it over in February 1987. It took 60 patients and put them in North York General Hospital and moved another 20 patients to other places around Toronto; we do not know where. What are the minister's plans to look after nursing home needs in Richmond Hill?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman is almost right. He is not quite right because the residents who were at Country Place were placed in many homes, some of them even closer to their own residences than Country Place, but there were a number of residents who agreed that they would prefer to be at the North York Seniors Health Centre which is sponsored by the hospital he mentioned.

We are quite well aware of the needs of the people in that area. In fact, one of the reasons we moved was that we were disturbed by the quality of care that was being provided. I am sure that during his supplementary the honourable gentleman would like to stand to applaud our action. I can tell the gentleman we are very aware of the need to look at what may be available for nursing home facilities in Richmond Hill. I am keeping my eye very closely on that situation, but we have not yet made a final resolution of how we would prefer to proceed.

Mr. Cousens: I think some members had a good laugh at the question. They would not be laughing if they were seniors in Richmond Hill looking for a place to go.

Mr. Speaker: Does the member have a supplementary?

Mr. Cousens: All that is serious. I think you should call them to order, Mr. Speaker, because this is a serious problem.

Mr. Speaker: Do you have a supplementary?

Mr. Cousens: The minister has still not addressed the question, which has to do with these seniors, and there are some 20 of them. I do not know where they are. I am sure the families know where they are, but where are they located? What is being done with them? He has closed down a nursing home for just cause and that is under review.

What happens back in our community? We need people to stay in their own communities to be serviced, to be looked after and to be comfortable. He has moved out one nursing home. He has no plans to come back into Richmond Hill. I would like to know specifically what he is going to do about those people in Richmond Hill who are looking for nursing home care. Will he bring back the 100 or so places from Country Place Nursing Home or does he have any plans at all?

Hon. Mr. Elston: To repeat what I said before, we have not yet come up with a final resolution of exactly how we are going to proceed in the Richmond Hill area but we recognize there is a need for beds.

I have some other information for the gentleman, and that is that he was part of the administration that provided us with long lists of seniors in this province who had no options whatsoever. What we are doing as a government is not merely building more beds, putting more beds out so that people can be institutionalized, we are also providing other options for those people, such as taking advantage of home care programs and of integrated homemaking programs that would allow people some choice other than to look for a bed in a nursing home or an extended care facility. We think they should have the opportunity of staying in their own homes, of being independent and of being part of the communities in which they grew up.

I think the gentleman, although he was unable to congratulate us on the move to protect the seniors in his area, would like at some future point to congratulate us on providing the seniors of this province with great opportunities to stay as independent and active members of their community, not only in Richmond Hill but also right around the province.

NIAGARA REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Swart: In the absence of the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), I would like to put a question to the Premier. He probably knows that the chairperson, Mrs. Clark, and 40 members of the Niagara Citizens' Committee are in the gallery today and he probably knows that they are calling on the government to revise substantially, provide an alternative or abolish the Niagara regional government. Given that the Liberal members from that area expressed similar views while they were in opposition and given that the Niagara regional council requested this external review, will the Premier now give a commitment that such a comprehensive review

of Niagara regional government will be undertaken by his government?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not sure I heard the question. Did the member say Mrs. Clark's committee was there to abolish regional government in the Niagara region or to abolish the member from Welland? I am not sure, but let me respond to the question.

Mr. Swart: I know that is a task you are taking on.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am honoured that the honourable member asked me a question and I am delighted it was not on insurance. Do the members opposite have insurance by the way? I recommend it to them.

I welcome the constructive ideas of Mrs. Clark and her committee. As the member knows, we are looking at regional government across the province. I can assure him that the serious recommendations put forward by the concerned committee will be taken into account by the minister. He has demonstrated an open mind to reviewing these situations in a sense, going on one by one. By virtue of the fact that the group is here today with its constructive ideas, I will share that with the minister. I am sure he will be prepared to look at this with an open mind.

Mr. Swart: I am not sure I heard any flat commitment in that. I would like to ask, by way of supplementary, whether the Premier will give a commitment that any study will be comprehensive and will cover such things as the structure of the police force, for instance, where there has been a lot of problems, what services could be delivered better at the local level and whether it is not more democratic to elect the single most important person in regional government, the regional chairman, rather than have him appointed. Will the Premier give a commitment that those things at least will be investigated by any study that is done?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think this government has demonstrated its leadership in looking at the question of regional government as it applies to various regions across the province. As the member knows, we have moved in some regards in that area. I will say to the member, and through him to his friends in the gallery, that I would like to look very seriously at the petition. I gather they have developed the ideas they have put forward. I will discuss them with the minister.

I can say in general terms that this government and the ministry have a very open mind on reassessing these institutions. If they are not

working well and effectively, we are looking for creative, new ideas to make them work well. Obviously, there are a number of people involved in these determinations, but I take the member's suggestion, and through him those of Mrs. Clark and her committee, as being very constructive in reviewing that institution of government. I can assure them it will get the attention of the minister.

CONTROL OF SMOKING

Mr. Sterling: I would like to ask a question of the Attorney General. Earlier this year, I congratulated him on his move to ban smoking from the courthouses of our province. Evidently, however, even though no-smoking signs have been put up in many of the courthouses, including our beautiful new courthouse in Ottawa that cost some \$50 million to the taxpayers of this province, no one seems to be paying any attention to the no-smoking signs. When asked in the courthouse, his sheriff indicated that there is no enforcement mechanism in place.

Is the Attorney General serious or is his government serious about attacking this health hazard, as we have seen exhibited by the federal government, or is he just doing a number of things in terms of announcements, tokens or whatever? I want to see some real action on this and I want to see his commitment, which I believe he wants to do.

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, the enforcement of these matters is a matter in every case for the local police who investigate if a complaint is made and lay a charge. We are anxious that should be done in the appropriate instances.

I have recently come to adopt the views of my honourable friend on the smoking issue. He will be interested to hear that in the office of the Attorney General a vote was held just the other day about whether smoking should be permitted. Smoking was rejected for the work force 32 to 3. If he wants to see a commitment, there it is.

PETITIONS

NIAGARA REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Mr. Swart: I have here not only one of the largest petitions I have ever presented in this House and one of the most worthy petitions, but also one of the best-bound petitions. It reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor in Council and the members of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, submit that the Niagara regional government is excessively costly and needlessly overlaps local municipal government and is lacking in accountability to the public. We therefore beseech the government of Ontario to authorize the Minister of Municipal Affairs to make substantial reforms, provide an alternative or abolish it altogether."

This is signed by 8,868 residents of the regional municipality of Niagara and is submitted under the Regional Municipality of Niagara Act, chapter 438, subsection 166(2), Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1980.

Mr. Speaker: Did the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) count that to make sure?

Mr. Swart: Yes, I did.

1520

NATUROPATHY

Mr. Andrewes: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is my constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of my preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

There are some 80 names on this petition.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: In the continuing saga, I have a petition:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

There are 112 signatures, bringing the total so far to 1,070. I ask the members to stay tuned for more.

NATUROPATHY

Mr. Cureatz: I have a petition from constituents in Durham East to introduce legislation that

would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment.

That petition bears 250 names.

Mr. Hayes: I have a petition signed by 20 people in my riding:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"Whereas it is my constitutional right to have available and to choose the health care system of my preference;

"And whereas naturopathy has had self-governing status in Ontario for more than 42 years;

"We petition the Ontario Legislature to call on the government to introduce legislation that would guarantee naturopaths the right to practise their art and science to the fullest without prejudice or harassment."

ABORTION SERVICES

Mr. Villeneuve: I have a petition that was circulated throughout my riding and is signed by 1,132 very concerned residents. It reads as follows:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislature of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, do hereby petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to reject the recommendations of the Powell study. We understand that this study recommends the opening of government-run abortion clinics. We believe that there are already too many abortions in Ontario, which totalled 27,000 in 1986, and would like to see access restricted and not made easier."

Mr. Pierce: I have a petition that reads as follows:

"To the honourable Legislature of Ontario in parliament assembled:

"The petition of the undersigned residents of Ontario, who now avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right thus to present a grievance common to your petitioners in the certain assurance that your honourable Legislature will therefore provide a remedy;

"Humbly sheweth: The operation of the Morgentaler and Scott abortuaries violate the intent of federal legislation and are in direct violation of the Criminal Code of Canada;

"Wherefore, we, the undersigned, ask the Legislature to enforce the law and to seek bail conditions for the abortionists involved in the illegal abortuaries."

It is signed by 24 petitioners.

Mr. Pierce: I have two other petitions:

"Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature:

"We are writing to express our objections to the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Powell study on access to abortion in the province of Ontario.

"We do not support the establishment of hospital-affiliated abortion clinics, nor will we support any candidate for office in the next provincial election who agrees with this proposal."

I have one other petition, which reads as follows:

"To the honourable Legislature of Ontario in parliament assembled:

"The petition of the undersigned residents of Ontario, who now avail themselves of their ancient and undoubted right thus to present a grievance common to your petitioners in the certain assurance that your honourable Legislature will therefore provide a remedy;

"Humbly sheweth: The Marion Powell report on abortions is biased, unbalanced and not in the best interests of the people;

"Wherefore, we, the undersigned, ask the Legislature to reject the Powell report and its recommendations in total."

It is signed by 21 members of the community.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MEMBERS' CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES CONFLITS D'INTÉRÊTS DES MEMBRES DE L'ASSEMBLÉE

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 23, An Act to provide for Greater Certainty in the Reconciliation of the Personal Interests of Members of the Assembly and the Executive Council with their Duties of Office.

L'hon. M. Scott propose la première lecture du projet de loi 23, Loi assurant une plus grande certitude quant au rapprochement des intérêts personnelles des membres de l'Assemblée et du Conseil des ministres avec les devoirs de leurs fonctions.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I paused in the introduction of that bill because I did not recognize it by its long title. Its short title, for those who remember it from the last session when it was differently entitled, then was the Members' Standard of Office Act.

It is precisely the same as the act that was introduced in the last session, with one excep-

tion. The Billy Joe MacLean case in Nova Scotia has brought to our attention the fact that in certain circumstances, disqualification on future membership in the assembly is probably an unsustainable limit on an individual's rights under section 3 of the Charter of Rights. Accordingly, the provision for disqualification from future membership has been deleted.

The enactment of this legislation continues to be a priority of the government and we look forward to the support of all members for it.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE ACT

LOI DE 1987 SUR LES JUGES DE PAIX

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 24, An Act to revise the Justices of the Peace Act.

L'hon. M. Scott propose la première lecture du projet de loi 24, Loi révisant la Loi sur les juges de paix.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I made an opening statement this afternoon.

INSTITUTE OF MUNICIPAL ASSESSORS ACT

Mr. Cousens moved first reading of Bill Pr63, An Act respecting the Institute of Municipal Assessors of Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF LONDON ACT

Ms. E. J. Smith moved first reading of Bill Pr51, An Act respecting the City of London.

Motion agreed to.

QUETICO FOUNDATION ACT

Mr. Bernier moved, seconded by Mr. Pierce, first reading of Bill Pr11, An Act to revive the Quetico Foundation.

Motion agreed to.

1530

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr. Rae: It is with a considerable degree of pleasure that I rise in my place to put forward the initial response of the New Democratic Party to

the speech from the throne that was read by His Honour last week.

I must say that when listening to the last two speeches from the throne and when listening to the comments that were made by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) in the very first week of the formation of the government in 1985, I could not resist noting that the government was pretending as if it were somehow the product of some sort of immaculate conception, that it simply fell from the sky.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Wait a minute. I am sorry; that is a mixed metaphor.

Mr. Rae: The Treasurer is looking uncomfortable because he was very much involved in the process that led up to the formation of the government.

I must also say that while I look with interest, read with interest and listen with interest to speeches from the throne, in the last two that have been delivered, the one last year and the one this year—I am going to have something to say about both of them—I think the government is simply kidding itself and is trying to kid the people of Ontario.

We all know it is a matter of historical fact, although never acknowledged publicly by the Premier and never acknowledged in this place by the Treasurer—perhaps for him because of his involvement in the negotiations that led up to the formation of the government—that there was a very elaborate process after the last election that established an agenda for reform and that established an agreement for a reform minority parliament, which agreement was signed on May 28, 1985, by the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, and by myself, the leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party. It is right here. Perhaps the camera can take a little time to focus on it. The Premier's signature is right here at the bottom of the page: "David Peterson, leader, Ontario Liberal Party, dated at Toronto, May 28, 1985."

I have verified this signature with others signed by the Premier. I have a letter I will be reading into the record later, addressed to the president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, in which the Premier explains why he has not been able to make up his mind on the question of free trade. It is a very interesting letter. But I just want to say that from my correspondence with the Premier, which is not particularly extensive over the years, I have become familiar with his particular script and his signature. I have never seen it at the bottom of a cheque but I have seen it at the bottom of a letter. I am satisfied on the

basis of other signatures I have seen that this is indeed the signature of the member for London Centre, the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party.

It is worth while at this time when there is so much speculation as to what might or might not happen this spring, and when we are presented with a—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: All of it from your House leader, who is round the bend on this matter.

Mr. Rae: The Treasurer's uneasiness and his uncharacteristic grumpy aggressiveness, which he has demonstrated over the last few days, as I think most people who are observers of human behaviour will agree, is the product of an extreme defensiveness. What is the cause of this defensiveness? On the basis of my analysis and observation, I would say it is stress because he was involved in this document and actually believes in the process that led up to it and because frankly, even though the definition of a Liberal is someone who does not know how to be embarrassed, the Treasurer does feel a little embarrassed by what has taken place.

Let me read into the record what this document that was signed by the Premier says. I think it is worth recalling what it says, because what it says is very clear. What it says, it seems to me, should put to an end to any question about what is the origin of the basic reform agenda. Also, it establishes very clearly just how much there still is to be done and how this document itself contemplates that period to complete the agenda which we negotiated at that time.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You not only sound like Neville Chamberlain; you look like him.

Mr. Rae: If I am Neville Chamberlain, who are you? You drew the comparison, Treasurer; I did not. I wish you would do that again. Will you please stay for the whole afternoon?

"On May 2, 1985, the people of Ontario created an opportunity for change after 42 years of Conservative government."

I am reading this because I think it is important that we recall just what happened and what our origins are as a parliament with respect to the agenda we are discussing.

"We are determined to accept responsibility for bringing about that change." "We" refers to David Peterson and Bob Rae. "During the election campaign, both the Liberal and New Democratic parties advanced significant public policy and legislative reform proposals. These proposals contained many elements in common, which are outlined in the attached documents."

"In the interests of making minority government work, we are committed to a program of

public policy reforms which will improve the quality of life for everyone in this province. We are also committed to legislative reforms designed to improve public access to and information about the legislative process in Ontario.

"It will take time to achieve these objectives. We have agreed on the need for a period of stability during which this program can proceed."

"Should the Lieutenant Governor invite the leader of the Liberal Party to form a government?"—I want to repeat this—"Should the Lieutenant Governor invite the leader of the Liberal Party to form a government, this agreement will be for two years from the day that the leader of the Liberal Party assumes the office of Premier."

There is no ambiguity. June 26, 1985, was the date upon which the Premier assumed office, and two years from then is June 26, 1987.

"It is understood that the traditions, practices and precedents of the Ontario Legislature are that individual bills are not considered matters of confidence unless so designated by the government."

"We undertake the following," with signatures specifically signed:

"1. The leader of the Liberal Party will not request a dissolution of the Legislature during the term of this agreement, except following defeat on a specifically-framed motion of nonconfidence."

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Or delay in the business of the House.

Mr. Rae: I see the Treasurer is adding new terms. He is shouting out some new concepts which are flowing to his mind, but it is here in our own writing. It is signed; it has been done. It has been signed, sealed and delivered. That is the nature of the agreement that has been made.

You do not see the Premier saying, when he comes away from Meech Lake, "Oh, that is not what I meant." You do not see him suddenly emerging from the accord which was signed at Meech Lake, to which I presume he affixed a signature, or perhaps he just initialled it, and saying: "It is not a legally binding document; it is just an agreement among politicians. We just gave our word. It does not mean anything."

I want to say to the Treasurer and to the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway), who is here, and to other members of the cabinet, let the Premier break his word. Let him not simply break his word in terms of the length of this agreement; let him break his word in terms of the things that remain to be done that he said would be done. Then let him go to the people and explain why the Liberal Party, of which he is the

leader, should ever be trusted by the people of Ontario again to do anything. Let him do that and let that be the message.

To conclude: "While individual bills, including budget bills, will not be treated or designated as matters of confidence, the overall budgetary policy of the government, including the votes on supply, will be treated as a matter of confidence."

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I want to state categorically that I do not intend in any way, shape or form to play any games.

I notice with interest that the leader of the Conservative Party did not move a motion of no confidence yesterday, which is unusual. I think it is fair to say that in the normal course of events, in a throne speech response there is a motion of no confidence that, in turn, in a majority parliament is usually amended in various ways and there are votes and it proceeds. He did not do so. Let me make it very clear. I do not intend to move a motion of no confidence, and we intend to continue to maintain the integrity of this accord, the integrity of this document, because I happen to think integrity in political life means something.

We have been told by various observers at different times that perhaps there would be ways of changing the agreement; perhaps it is something that might not have been the wisest course to follow. I do not accept that, but let me say this: Having taken our party and caucus through that process of negotiation, having negotiated the very specific areas of reform I am now going to outline, and having not simply done that but having said to the people of Ontario, "We are prepared to change from 42 years of Tory rule, but we are prepared to do so only under certain agreements between political parties with respect to stability in a minority parliament," I want to state categorically that my word—Bob Rae's word—and the word of the New Democratic Party mean something.

Let us wait and see whether the word of the Premier and the Liberal Party of Ontario mean something. Only time will tell.

Let us also look at what this legislative reform is, because the package of reform that is the accord is in fact the basis, not of a wish list but of what this Legislative Assembly has been doing for the past two years. There are some exceptions, such as the motion that was moved by my colleague the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) with respect to human rights and sexual orientation. It is fair to say that took up a fair amount of time for a period and focused the

attention of the House. I am proud of the role my colleague played in that regard.

It is also true to say that we spent a considerable amount of time in question period dealing with the question of car insurance, and the government has now told us it is going to be responding to that part of the agenda and is going to be doing something about that.

I do not mind saying that, apart from a few deviations, which I think on the whole can be shown to be pretty minor in terms of the direction of this government—and it is not something the Liberal Party likes; it is not something I expect it ever to say; it is not something I await on the edge of my chair saying, "I wonder when the Premier or any of the members of the cabinet are going to recognize that when they talk about moving child care to becoming a public service and not a form of welfare, they are borrowing directly from the wording of the accord itself."

I do not expect them to admit it, but let us just state as a matter of fact, because I think it is important for us to have some respect for facts, that the fact of the matter is that the reform agenda that has been the agenda of this Legislative Assembly has been the agenda of the accord—not lived up to all the time, not in a perfect way, not in the way we would have liked in all circumstances.

I will be going into some areas we think are inadequate, but the direction, the agenda, however poorly or inadequately it may have been addressed by the Liberal Party, has been the agenda of the accord, not these 50-page or 60-page pieces of general wafflegab and baffle-gab, not the one last year, whose only new take-off point—and I was having difficulty remembering until a member of the gallery reminded me—was the high-tech fund in the Premier's Council, which has been such a tremendous source of bamboozlement and glee for those of us watching the way in which governments can sometimes misspend and badly spend public dollars. No, this is not the agenda of this session.

When people ask me what I think of the speech from the throne, and I will be coming to it in a moment, I must say it really is of no importance in comparison to what we are all about as a Legislature. What we have been about, as a matter of fact, as a Legislature, is the agenda established in the accord. As a matter of historical fact, it is important for us to recall that for a moment and not to pretend it is anything else.

Look at the bills that are matters of priority which were put through and dealt with by the assembly as recently as this last break.

Nursing home reform: a cause that has been espoused by my party for the past 20 years and with which all of us have been involved—I look around at my colleagues and know that all of us have been involved—in some way, shape or form in shaping and directing. How proud we are that our colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) was finally able to convince the government to accept in the legislation amendments with respect to a bill of rights for nursing home residents. We do not expect the government to admit that is where the piece of advice came from; we do not expect it to say that, but again let us establish it as a matter of historical fact.

Pension reform, which my colleague the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan) has been championing so effectively: again, an issue which we as New Democrats championed through the whole array of special committees it went through. Again, that is on the agenda because of the work that has been done by the New Democratic Party and because it has been specifically laid out here as being an area that will be addressed in that two-year period. We have yet to complete that work.

Equal pay: here because we have a commitment from the two parties that there would be an introduction of legislation for equal pay for work of equal value in both the public and the private sectors. It has been a long haul. We are not there yet. The legislation can still use a great deal of improvement before it becomes law, in my view and in our view, but let us be under no illusion; it is there because it was put there in the accord.

That accord was signed by two people who had a sense at that time that it was a golden opportunity in terms of a movement for reform, for us to move, to make things happen in this province in ways they had not happened before. As I say, I do not expect the government to admit it, but I think it is important that as a matter of historical record we get some of those things on the record and clearly establish without any illusion where these ideas came from. They did not fall from the sky. They are not the product of something that emerged whole from the head of anyone in the Premier's office. Speeches from the throne did; the Premier's office can have this one.

This four-page, simple document has laid out the pattern of reform that we have injected into this legislative session and that we intend to keep pushing and pressing for because we think it is what the people of this province want. It is worth recalling that it has proved to be a very popular

agenda. It is a populist agenda. It is a people's agenda that has made a difference. Whenever the government has deviated from the people's agenda, it has given people an indication as to what kind of party it really is on its own. I think that is something that is becoming clearer and clearer for us.

I do not normally want to do this, but because I have the opportunity and a bit of time, I want to go over the groundwork again and remind people precisely what that document called for, how much progress we have made and where we have not made progress. It may take a little bit of time, but I know, Mr. Speaker, you will bear with me as we go through it.

Legislation on freedom of information and the protection of privacy has been in committee. Coming out, we are still facing a battle as to what extent the government is going to accept amendments that are coming forward from the New Democratic Party and the other party.

Reform of the House: We have come some way in that regard, not as far as we would like.

Changes to broadening the powers of the public accounts committee and the Provincial Auditor: We have made some progress in that regard.

Select committees are meeting right now—that is why my colleagues are not here—on the commercialization of health and social services, and to study and report on bilateral environmental issues affecting Ontario.

We did not establish a standing committee on energy to oversee Ontario Hydro, but we did have the continuing work of the special committee.

We had the establishment of a committee on procedures for appointments in the public sector but the government has not accepted the recommendations of the committee, so we are still stuck in the old days of patronage. The government has said it is going to endeavour to make them as representative as possible, but I still think most of us are very suspicious as to why the government would not have accepted the very wise recommendations that were made by the standing committee of which my friend the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breagh) is the very able, indeed brilliant and wise, chairman.

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Election financing reform: We have done it. We have set limits. For years we tried to get the Tories to accept the principle that one should not be able to buy one's way into public life in this province. We finally have legislation that I think

compares to most other legislation in the western world with respect to financing reform.

Redefinition and broadening of the rights of public service workers to participation in political activity: We have not yet achieved that. We have had a report from Mr. Breithaupt. We have had no indication of legislation from the Attorney General (Mr. Scott).

Electronic Hansard: We have it and I think it is a good thing we do, too. It allows the public to see what is going on and allows a relative equality and democracy in terms of the way in which the participation of all members is perceived.

Then we turn the page to some areas not simply of electoral reform and what we called at that time the kind of Vatican II reforms with respect to making this Legislature work better; we then move into the substantive policy areas.

Implementation of separate school funding: Done.

Introduce programs to create employment and training opportunities for young people: The Futures program, an inadequate concept, is something that, as my colleague the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) has so effectively pointed out, is a sense of beginning that leaves so many people left out. There is a great deal to do there.

Ban extra billing by medical doctors: It has happened, except we now see this new range of new charges that we have to deal with.

The sections of the Environmental Protection Act dealing with spills have been proclaimed.

We have new rent review legislation, but the Liberals broke their word on four per cent review. I want to tell the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling), who is here in the House, that I would like him to come into my riding during the election campaign and explain to the tenants in the Jane-Woolner estate and in so many other estates, who are now getting bills of 10, 11 and 12 per cent and seeing them approved, just how much the Liberals have done with respect to breaking that basic commitment.

Equal pay I have touched on.

First-contract law we now have.

Reforms to the Occupational Health and Safety Act: One of the great sadnesses of this two-year period, in my judgement, has been the fact that despite the eloquent work of my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) we have yet to get the government to move in this area.

There is much to be done. Reporters ask me how I feel about the throne speech response in

terms of new health and safety legislation, and all I can say is: "It is in the accord. We do not need another written declaration that this is what they intend to do. We want to have it happen."

The prebudget freeze on the ad valorem gas tax and the inquiry into gas price differentials: This is a battle yet to be won. We are going to be debating it again here on Thursday. In fact, the issue has gone so far that even the Tories now have been converted. On that great highway to the north, they have somehow been converted, but I remind our friends in the Conservative Party that when we proposed legislation from the New Democratic Party, it was the Tories who defeated that legislation with respect to removing gas price differentials between north and south.

We have wound up the Royal Commission on the Northern Environment, but the Liberals have established more than 20 other special task forces, special little groups, special studies and special commissions, so the tendency to royal commissionify everything has not been eliminated.

Provide full coverage of medically necessary travel under the Ontario health insurance plan: Coverage, yes. Full? There are still arguments in debate. My colleague the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) has raised many examples in our own caucus of where the program is still inadequate.

Then we have the other areas that are to be addressed, and the record is less good there.

Affirmative action and employment equity for women, minorities and the handicapped: Nothing; not a word. Nothing even in the throne speech. I must say that I was expecting something in the throne speech. There is not even a mention of the results of the eye count survey; we are still waiting for that. I see a comment coming from a Liberal member saying, "Perhaps soon." I hope soon, and I hope that when it comes soon, we will in fact begin to see legislation, because I say to members of this House, there is an enormous sense of frustration among many people working in the public sector and the private sector that this problem has simply not been addressed, that it has not been addressed with the same degree of force and focus as other issues have been addressed. I think it is time we did address it.

The speech from the throne mentions the disabled and I am going to be coming to that when I have an opportunity. It talks about that a bit but it does not mention the specific commitment with respect to affirmative action and employment equity.

The housing program: Yes, we have made a start, but how much more do we have to do? I will be coming to that in a moment.

Mechanisms for the control of pollution to enable Ontario to deal effectively with acid rain and to establish the principle that the polluter pays: We have made a little progress but we are not there yet.

Reform of services for the elderly to provide alternatives to institutional care and a reform of the present nursing home licensing and inspection system: I am going to be coming back to this question but we are not there yet. The verbal promises have been repeated two years later but we are still not there.

Listen to this one: Reform of job security legislation, including notice and justification of layoffs and plant shutdowns, and improved severance legislation. Zero. No progress at all in that regard, and in particular, not even a mention in a throne speech that mentions every subject from soup to nuts, that touches everything that moves in the province. They manage to ignore entirely the questions of severance pay, job security legislation and justification for plant shutdowns and layoffs.

Farm financing reform, including low-interest loans for farmers: Ontario remains the only province in Confederation that does not have a decent long-term program with respect to farm finance.

Workers' compensation reform: Zero, apart from the reluctant and tardy acceptance by the Liberals of our amendment with respect to the question of the cost-of-living index to be tied to pensions. We are battling about private pension reform now.

Reform of day care policy and funding to recognize child care as a basic public service and not a form of welfare: We are battling about that now.

An independent audit of Ontario's forest resources, and additional programs to provide for the ongoing regeneration of Ontario's forests: We are scarcely there.

What I am trying to say is not that this agenda has been lived up to, because it has not; what I am saying is that this is the agenda the government has had to address, not all the fluff and faldral that comes out of the various wish lists and ideas that stem from speeches from the throne. That has not been the work of this Legislative Assembly and I dare say it will not be the work of this Legislative Assembly for the next two months or six or eight months or indeed the next year, because to be blunt about it, it has taken the

Liberal Party longer to deal with some of these questions than we had—I cannot say expected, but certainly longer than we had ever hoped.

I want to say to the Minister of Education, who is looking with such interest at participating in this debate—I will have some comments to make about the brave new world of education he is planning for my kids with respect to the future—that if one has to look at the facts with respect to the agenda, this is where one needs to go. This is it. There is nothing else in terms of what the real agenda has been for the past two years.

However inadequately, however ineptly, however partially, however reluctantly, however haphazardly, however intermittently it has been addressed, it has been the agenda of reform for the people of Ontario and that is a fact no one can deny and no one will deny.

There have been some deviations—free trade, to mention one—that I will be coming to in a moment. There is the Premier's Council, the experiment with high technology that has been a tremendous disaster for this government. There is car insurance, the issue that we understand from reading the columns of James Coutts and others causes Liberals to wake up in the middle of the night and say: "Oh, my goodness, we had better deal with this one. We had better try to put this one to sleep. Everything else seems to be okay out there, but I do not know what to do about this one. We have to deal with this one." Then there are of course the other deviations contained in this recent throne speech.

Because it is so completely incoherent and in comparison with "An Agenda for Reform" lacks any sense of direction of where it is going, how it is going to be done or what the legislative agenda is going to be, with some considerable reluctance I have to address, as my friend and colleague the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party addressed yesterday, this framework for a world-class 21st century that was presented to us, the 50-page document that I gather was written by Scoop Golombek, the speechwriter and chief thinker. Scoop Golombek, the major brains trust for the Liberal Party at the moment, was the chief draftsman for this. Scoop covered me a while on the last campaign trail. Then he went off to work for the Liberals.

1600

Mr. McClellan: Along with about a hundred other people.

Mr. Rae: Along with everybody else, but that was after the election. They left afterwards.

It is a document I do not quite know how to summarize. In fact, that is obviously the problem they had too when they came to write it. It was very difficult to find the focus.

I find it ironic that, when all of us in the business and world of politics are being told to focus, concentrate and simplify our message; to KISS—"Keep it simple, stupid"; the basic piece of advice we all receive as we head into the various forums and arenas of battle we undertake—this one certainly has not kept it simple. This one has in a sense touched every base without actually saying anything at all of any significance about any of them.

It has established as a slogan a principle I had to write down and think about: "The government which governs best is the government which reaches out to the greatest number of people." That is an interesting slogan and since it appears to be the one slogan that the government hopes is going to be picked up, I want to address that one very directly because it is an interesting concept of government.

It is sort of government as mindless octopus, a government that attempts to touch everyone, if only a little bit; not to do anything for them, not actually to change anything, but simply to reach out and somehow touch all those bases, to sort of stroke everyone who seems to have a problem and to touch everyone who has a concern. If somebody from whatever community—whether it is the disabled, northern Ontario, eastern Ontario or whatever group it may happen to be that is raising concerns—is saying something, make sure you mention them in the throne speech and be open and accessible or at least appear to be.

It reaches very much to the heart and the core, as I have tried to understand it, of the style of the Premier and of this Liberal government. They have received very clear media advice from people: "It does not matter what you do. It is designed for this media world that we are in. It does not matter what you do. The substance of what you do or what you stand for does not matter. What matters is that you appear to be open and accessible."

I watch and I quite marvel at the Premier, who receives all kinds of petitions and advice. On every occasion he says, "I appreciate your advice." Occasionally, if he is in one of his grumpy moods, if he has had a bad day or if he is off to a bad start, he will get snippy, raise his elbows a bit and respond in ways that he learns to regret. He will say, as we all say from time to time, things we wish had not been said.

Basically, the script—not the script that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) reads out, but the other script, because that is the script I want to come to; central casting breaks down when we deal with the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. When he answers questions, I can see them tearing their hair out, saying, "No, do not answer that one"—the script the Premier has is to say: "I am easy. I am open. I am accessible. I have no position on this. We have no real position on this. We are open. We will touch everyone. We will touch every base. Reach out and touch someone. I will touch someone. You touch me and I will touch you."

It is sort of corporate Fritz Perls; it is a sort of Gestalt therapy theory of government. It does not address anything. It is designed to make everybody feel better. It is designed to be a kind of Dr. Feelgood approach to government. It is not intended to deal with difficult, tough questions. I must confess it is not a style I find particularly appealing. If I am dealing with government, I must confess I much prefer a government that says: "This is what we are going to do. We cannot do this because we do not have the money, because we do not believe in it, because we think it is a bad idea," whatever it may be. Then at least you know where you are.

The Liberal Party's approach is to say: "We will reach out and touch you. We will reach out and we will give you a massage. We will reach out and make you feel better." It is a sort of a laying-on-of-hands approach to government. I do not think it works. I do not think it is an approach that does justice to what the people of Ontario need. I might also say that I do not think it is an approach that deals with the fundamental questions we face. It is an approach that avoids difficulty. It avoids the necessary confrontations of life, because to deal with those is to deal with some of the necessary choices that are there.

When I hear things such as, "Excellence must begin early," who am I to say that it should not? Who among us in this House is going to say, "No, excellence must begin late, not early?" It is a world of such fatuousness that it is scary to think of who, apart from Scoop, actually inhabits this world. Who is it who inhabits this world? "Excellence must begin early."

We find, for example, that when dealing with the question of the drop-out rate, the government's response is to list a number of things it is doing, and there are three things. The third thing is, "We are going to co-ordinate existing

activities." Who among us is to say, "No, you must not co-ordinate existing activities"?"

Mr. McClellan: Tony Ruprecht would say that.

Mr. Rae: Well, there are members who would say, "No, we will not do that," but there is a test that I try to apply to a lot of sentences that even I myself occasionally say. Who is going to disagree with this? What is being said?

"We must improve Ontario's competitive position." "No, we want Ontario's competitive position to deteriorate." It is a ludicrous statement.

"We want to create full opportunity for women." "No, we do not."

One can go down the list and say that the statement of objectives is such fluff.

Hon. Mr. Curling: Positive.

Mr. Rae: The Minister of Housing says it is positive. I want to say to the minister that I do not think it is positive to state fatuous truisms and pass them off as policy analysis. I do not think that is positive. I think that ultimately does the people of the province a disservice. What should have been said is: "We all agree on these objectives. How are we going to get there and what are the choices that will make that happen?"

Here are some favourites of mine:

"The rekindling of the entrepreneurial spirit." Presumably the Liberals are talking about commercial day care there. I do not know what they are talking about.

"People have higher standards of performance for themselves and for their children." I do not know whether I have higher standards for my kids than my father and mother had for me. I have no idea. I think they had pretty high standards, if I remember correctly. When I used to come home with my report card, I seem to remember that standards were pretty high in those days.

"We will act to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption." That is my favourite. "No, we are going to encourage dissolution, dissolute behaviour and alcohol abuse in everyone over the age of 18, and even for those under the age of 18."

We will put two things together: the Liberal Party policy and the Liberal Party sentence. "We will act to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption," and then add the next phrase, "by making beer and wine available in every corner store in the province of Ontario." That is how one puts the lie to the general gist and to the general nonsense. This is where we find Liberals cannot have it both ways. If you deal with the fundamentals and if you deal with the very basic

questions that are there, the Liberals have consistently avoided the difficult issues, the difficult choices and the difficult questions.

When I read this speech, I first thought there were nine priorities because those were the ones that were listed at the beginning. Then, as the speech continued, there were not just nine; it went on and on. There were dozens more that followed. I do not intend to get into every one of them because there are limits to the capacity of the mind to deal with these questions.

What I do want to say is that if we look at some of the fundamental questions—trade, and I will touch on that; the environment; health and safety; the future of our health care system, just to mention some—as well as the importance of looking at affirmative action as the next agenda that will have to be addressed not only in terms of women but also in terms of our disabled population and many of our visible minorities who have this sense of frustration about not being able to participate fully in this province, in each one of these questions the Liberals really have told us nothing.

1610

On the matter of trade, the Liberals have told us nothing about where they stand on the most important question facing this province. To read the document, one would scarcely know that we are in the middle of what is perhaps one of the most important historic national debates with respect to the future of our economy and our country. Anyone reading this document would not realize that the federal government is engaged in a major adventure, which I happen to think is folly, attempting to further integrate our economy into the American economy as a solution to our problems, and that the debate in a sense should be joined across the country.

Look back at 1911 and 1948. Look back at the 1880s when the national policy was first devised. The question of our relationship in trading terms with the United States has been one of the continuing and most fundamental questions affecting Canadians' view of themselves, their economy, their identity and who they are. We are now in the middle of yet another stage in that debate, but where is Ontario? I will tell you where Ontario is; it is absolutely nowhere.

The Premier has just written a letter to Mr. Wilson, the president of the Ontario Federation of Labour. Mr. Wilson was writing him with respect to concerns that the OFL has about the federal negotiations with respect to the United States relating to free trade.

The first thing the Premier does is to say, "I understand and appreciate your concerns and I am glad to have this expression of your views." That is touching. He is reaching out and he is touching Gord Wilson. He is saying: "Gord, I hear you. I know where you are coming from and I am listening to you. I am touching you, Gord. Come in and see me some time. Let us talk about this over coffee, because I am listening and I am hearing what you are saying. I am open to whatever it is that you are up to, Gord, and I really hear your concerns."

The Premier goes on to say, "You may be assured that I have no intention of buying a pig in a poke." That is refreshing. He could have said, "You may be assured that I have every intention of buying a pig in a poke." At least he did not say that.

"As you know, I have been very cautious on this issue"—Lord knows he has been cautious on this issue—"and have been anxious to ensure that all aspects are taken fully into account." That is certainly true enough.

"The prospect of a major liberalization of trade between Canada and the United States would bring with it difficult problems of adjustment. I am very conscious of the adjustment problems faced by the Ontario economy as a result of the intense international competition, even without the added complexity of further trade liberalization."

At the same time he goes on to say: "Ontario has major interests in trade with the United States. I am concerned that we should find a better way of managing the trading relationship in order to safeguard and promote this mutually advantageous trade."

Having touched him and stroked him, he then proceeds to say: "I am very cautious." Here is a little bit for you on the plus side and here is a little bit for you on the minus side.

He then says, "For these reasons, I am not in a position to take an unqualified view for or against the trade negotiations currently under way."

I want to read that one again: "For these reasons, I am not in a position to take an unqualified view for or against the trade negotiations currently under way."

The date of the letter is April 23, 1987. When it comes to the speech from the throne, which was April 28, he said that Ontario is going to "voice its strong concerns about the potential impact an unfavourable agreement could have on all Canadians."

What the heck else would one expect from any government than that it would simply do its job in

voicing concerns about an unfavourable agreement? That is not the issue; that is not what is at stake here. What is at stake here is whether the government of Canada should be involved in attempting to establish a comprehensive free trade relationship with the United States. That is what is at issue.

From the very beginning of those negotiations, all the New Democratic Party of Ontario and the New Democratic Party of Canada have been asking is that the government simply recognize that that kind of negotiation is a mistake. What we have been asking the Premier to say is that the search for a comprehensive, integrated relationship with the United States can bring only harm to our sense of what it means to be Canadians.

I speak very directly about this. If we have a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States, it will restrict the ability of governments to deal with economic problems on both sides of the border. It will limit the ability of our government, as well as the ability of democratically elected governments in the United States, to deal with problems that are there, and it will further integrate our economy directly into the American economy. We will be for all time a branch plant of the United States, and that is a status I do not consider a vision for the 21st century when it comes to Canada. That is what it is all about.

If we are going to address some of the problems my colleagues the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) and the member for Sudbury East and so many others have been raising over the years in this House, if we are going to address the fact that our manufacturing base is being steadily eroded as we continue to import more and more finished goods into the country and export fewer and fewer finished goods and provide for fewer and fewer of our own needs from our own capacities and abilities as an industrial country, then the road to the future is not very difficult to mark.

Our prosperity will depend entirely on what takes place in the American economy. Whether we live and grow or whether we contract will depend entirely on our cousins in the United States. It will depend entirely on what head office says and does in the United States, not on what decisions are made in Canada.

I do not think the Premier has played his cards right. There are those who say the Premier has been very canny by sitting on the fence, and quite determinedly so too. He seems to have been sitting there so long his numbness has given him almost a sense of pleasure, but from the point of

view of the real interests of the people of Ontario and indeed of Canada, I do not think we have been well served. Once that train has left the station, once the momentum for a deal has been established, Ontario has put itself in a position where it has basically said, "We have no veto."

The Premier talks boldly about a veto. The time to exercise it, if there is one, is when it is a political one, not a legal one, and that is one you exercise at the very beginning.

He says to the government of Canada, "Get off that train." He says to the government of Canada: "We are not going to have a so-called big agreement. We are simply going to have discussions"—if we have discussions—"which focus on the question of resolving our trade disputes and nothing else." If he attempts to establish some ground rules early on in the game and attempts to use his influence to do that, he can have some effect. That is what the Premier has chosen not to do.

There are those who say, "Given the way in which public opinion shifts back and forth, he has been canny." I have no idea whether that is canny or not in that sense, and frankly I really think that is of less interest than the substance of the question. The question is not whether the Liberal Party survives for another three or four years; the question is what happens to Canada. If the question is what happens to Canada, you do not wait for a poll to come out and say: "We had better get on this one. That is where it is going."

If you believe intellectually—and I do not know whether anybody over there does or not; I have no idea, but I certainly believe in my heart—that if we have a comprehensive trade agreement with the United States, it means the end of an independent Canada as far as our economy is concerned and that our other institutions will follow as surely as night follows day. That is not my vision of the future; that is not what our Fathers of Confederation talked about in 1867; that has not been the dream of social reform in this country for the last 120 years.

1620

The dream has been for us to build on this side of the 49th parallel a country, a community, which believes in itself, which has enough self-confidence to provide jobs for its citizens and which has enough self-confidence and belief in its own vision and its own destiny to stand alone in a community of nations and with other nations, not huddled under the protective wing of one particular country in the world, the United States of America.

I disagree profoundly with the Premier. I have no idea whether he is going to break his word and call an election before June 26 or whether he is going to wait until the summer or the fall or whenever it may happen to be; I do not know that. I do not know whether his timing decisions depend on whether an agreement will be drafted in June or whether something will come in September. I do not know whether he plans to say something about an agreement sooner or later.

All I know, and I say this to this group here because I believe it so profoundly, is that I believe Ontario has been poorly served. I believe Canada has been poorly served by the failure of Ontario to launch a national debate on the question of free trade. The time to start that debate was as soon as Brian Mulroney decided he would initiate such a discussion without any form of political mandate for the people of Canada to do that. But that is not the Premier's style. The Premier's style is to wait. His style is to wait and see which way the wind blows, to let the negotiations proceed.

I must confess I know many of the players, and as I discuss with them and with people who are negotiating what the position is Ontario is taking in these negotiations, I say, "Do you think that David Peterson is really opposed to free trade?" The answer comes back almost chuckling, a deep laugh from whomever it is I am asking. The answer is, "No way."

He is not saying the things behind closed doors that he is saying when he comes outside. His negotiators are not raising the concerns with Ottawa they say they are raising when they come into this Legislature. We are not getting the same message with respect to what is going on with free trade. The basic message that is coming out, and it is coming out in the civil service, it is coming out in the Ottawa civil service and the Quebec civil service and wherever it is across the country where these discussions are held, is that Ontario thinks the deal is there. The only question is how do we adjust to the deal that is basically in the works? That is the position of the Premier of Ontario.

As I say, I could not care less about how it affects Gallup or Goldfarb. The issue is how it affects Canada. I do not think we as Canadians have been well served, and I certainly do not think we are well served by the remarks that are contained in the throne speech with respect to this question.

I do not intend to go on at any great length about all the other issues that are touched on.

We are all in favour of education. Everybody believes in literacy. The issue is, how do we do it? How much money are we prepared to spend to do it? How much are we prepared to change curricula in order to give some assistance to kids?

The one point I would make in response to a lot of the focus on education which is coming from the government at the moment is twofold.

First, the statement is made that the drop-out rate is going to be cut by one third within the next five years. I cannot imagine a more modest and frankly half-hearted objective than that. At the close of the debate on Bill 30, I said if you come into my constituency the real question is whether kids are going to be able to drop out of grade 10 in a separate school or in a public school; that issue has to be addressed by governments, and it has yet to be. The Liberals' response is to give George Radwanski another job. We wish him well—his drop-out problem has certainly been solved—but to talk about co-ordinating existing government initiatives and to set themselves a target that can only be described as inadequate or half-hearted is a dream and a vision which I think would discourage virtually anybody working in the system or living in the education system.

One fact the government did not recognize and deal with, and this is where I must say the focus on excellence and competition and entrepreneurial spirit really misses the point, is that we all want excellence for our kids, but not everybody is going to be a grade A student, and it is a terrible illusion and a terrible unfairness to those children to assume and to allege or to predict that if we have a better system, that is what will happen.

The real challenge for the school system is not the Ontario Schools, Intermediate and Senior Divisions curriculum guidelines and how we deal with making the system more accessible to the more academically gifted kids, which has been the thrust of government policy for so many years. The real challenge of our school system is how to provide a real education and a real sense of challenge and involvement for those kids who are turned off the first day they arrive in a classroom. They are bewildered and do not know where to go, and they never feel at home and never feel comfortable.

I do not claim to be an educational expert. I have received a fair amount of formal and informal education in my lifetime and I have some very strong feelings about it, but my one basic gut hunch about all the facts and statistics you are going to find is that if you trace the career of somebody who drops out in grade 9 or grade

10, you can see the problem from a very early age.

We hear all this talk about excellence, competition and entrepreneurialism. You can have all the junior chamber of commerce classes that you want in grade 3 and teach Johnny how to go out and establish a commercial day care centre as soon as he leaves high school, but that is not going to address the problem of the vast majority of children who are in our system and who are still not getting the maximum benefit from it.

Not once has the government addressed the question of class size. Not once has the government said, "Class sizes for some kids are too large and we know that if we can get those sizes down, we are going to be able to do something for those children." Not once has it dealt with something as direct and as real as that. That is real.

We do not ask this document or the Liberal Party to talk about anything real. It is far better that it talks about visions and chairs and entrepreneurship in our universities and about injecting entrepreneurial values into grade 1. I am not making that up. It is right in here. My colleague the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) says it will teach the kids how to flip their lunches. I thought that was pretty good.

I think the principle has to be established that we are not simply cynical about education and using education as some sort of political football in the most general sense. Sure there are problems—no party has raised these more consistently than our own—but there are choices to be made and real decisions to be made in dealing with those problems. They are not vague. They are not generalities. They are real.

I have listened to the speech from the throne. I have also listened to the comments of the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. You could go over the list. It is so unfocused that in a sense your own speech begins to reflect a bit of that if you follow it too closely, and so I do not intend to.

I could go over all the areas. The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) is here. I could say to him that what he has said in this speech is exactly the same as what Frank Drea used to say five years ago, and nothing has changed. The government of Ontario has done nothing to deal with the basic bureaucratic screw-up in the delivery of care to our elderly and our disabled or with the problem with our health care system. When the present Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) was the Minister of Health, he said exactly the same things. I am

sorry to say that nothing has changed in the rhetoric that is coming out of Queen's Park.

The objectives are bold: community health care and more healthy lifestyles. It is all there. Who among us is going to argue for a more bloated, unhealthy and obesity-ridden lifestyle? None of us here.

That is not the issue. The question is, and I think this is the question, why have neither the Liberals nor the Tories been able to deal with that bureaucratic mass, with the sense of disorganization and with the refusal to organize and deliver care that takes place in the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ministry of Health, or with the conflict between those two? Why has it taken so long? That is the question that the throne speech should address, and that is the question that has not been addressed.

What we need in this province is not just another throne speech; what we need in this province is not entrepreneurship. What we need is justice.

1630

We have a problem. We have two economies working side by side. We have a productive economy that wants to grow and that is looking for the opportunity to grow, and we have a casino economy that, like a cancer, is taking over that productive economy. I mean that quite literally.

If you open up and look at every business page in the province today, you will find stories not of new products, new inventions and new partnerships in terms of workers and management working together and finding new ways to create; what you will find is stories of people from overseas or Canadians or Americans buying up other companies and finding ways to flip quickly.

You will find a speculative housing market in Toronto, which is starting to cool off marginally from the superheated form it was in, that makes average house values of \$150,000, \$200,000 and \$250,000 the rule rather than the exception. You have an industrial working class, if I can be so bold as to use that expression in this House, that, coming out of wartime, saw that it could afford to buy a house and that it would have a steady job in an industry that was growing. Today, you have two-income families that cannot afford to buy a house and that are faced with the prospect of renting for ages and ages or else are limited to the very margins of the housing market, completely insecure as to whether their jobs will be there in a week or 10 days or two weeks or five weeks, or whether they will be bought up and thrown out by

a Conrad Black or a Sir James Goldsmith or whoever it may happen to be.

So we have that conflict between a productive economy and a casino economy. We have had in the province—there is really no mention of this in the speech; I do not think I am alone in this and I do not think one has to be a socialist to see it and feel it—a sense that so much of the wealth being created today is created so quickly and in a sense so artificially that it seems almost to evaporate in paper and in paper hands. It is a paper kind of economy.

Contrast that with the statements expressed in this House even today by my colleague the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) and the nitty-gritty reality that we all live with in our constituency offices. I have a housing case load up to here that I cannot solve. I have people up to here in my office who are looking for affordable housing and it has not stopped.

I know the unemployment rate is relatively low in Metropolitan Toronto, but I still find myself talking to 52-year-old women who have been laid off after 25 years. I say, "Have you tried looking for a job?" They just smile and say, "Mr. Rae, have you been out there lately, if you are a little bit older?" There are young people who still cannot find that place, that first job, that ability to get trained.

What they get is a government that wants to reach out and touch them, so the government will put out ads. The government of Ontario's solution to the problem of seniors is to put out some new ads on television. Zippity-do-dah. That is exactly the approach I suggest the member for London North (Mr. Van Horne) would have had a field day with when he used to sit on this side of the House. He knows that. He knows that is not what seniors want. He knows that is not the way to make the changes happen.

This contrast between the productive economy and the casino economy has many manifestations. It manifests itself in poverty. It manifests itself in farmers being driven off the land for the 10th year in a row. We all learned about the cycle in economics 101, that in some years it would be down and in some it would be up—I remember those classes so vividly—but now you see a 10-year trough and it is not getting any better.

The government response is to do exactly the same thing, to continue with the process and pretend it is not happening. We find it in terms of the hard poverty and welfare statistics that build up and that are frightening in their implication. We find it in the fact that there are food banks

opening up in Metropolitan Toronto, even now when our unemployment rate is at five per cent. Perhaps the government should be thinking about why there are food banks when unemployment is at five per cent. We did not even have food banks during the Diefenbaker recession in 1958, and now we do.

Why is that? Does it not mean that somehow this wealth has just not been shared and distributed? Does it not mean that somehow there is a productive and wealthy economy out there? There are more Jaguars on the road than I have ever seen before, just by observation as I drive. I am astonished at the number of Jaguars and expensive cars, just astonished. Occasionally, I go walking away from Queen's Park and up to Bloor Street. I look in the boutiques and I cannot believe my eyes at the prices that are being asked and the sense of wealth that is there.

I was waiting for my Toronto Star newspaper on Saturday and I got a copy of a new, quality, lifestyle publication called *Elegance* with a picture of a cheery fellow who is among the many Torontonians who have their own private wine cellar. It comes out of 1 Yonge Street. I do not know any more about it than that. It introduces the reader to "our advisory board" and it says:

"These are the people who by class, style and involvement have established Toronto as one of the world's leading cities. They will advise and inform *Elegance* on the parties, the balls and the fund-raising events that make this a caring city." Is that not a wonderful expression? I love that. I am going to read that again. "They will advise and inform *Elegance* on the parties, the balls and the fund-raising events that make this a caring city."

Some of the articles are: "Nectar of the Gods," which is about wine; "Condos of the Rich and Famous," which is about Ivan Fleischmann; "Seeking Sondra," which is about Sondra Gotlieb; "Jewelled Footnotes," which I presume is about jewellery; and so on. What I find intriguing is that this stuff is catering to people out there. There is obviously a market for this stuff. What I find ironic and tragic is that this is the focus now of the lifestyles of the rich and famous.

The Premier is in here. He has his tuxedo on. He puts one on every day now these days. Here he is talking with the editor of the Toronto Sun. "Publisher Paul Godfrey is caught talking politics with Premier David Peterson in the Sheraton Centre ballroom." They are at some event or another.

Even tomorrow night, the government is sponsoring a black-tie dinner. They invited me to

invite 12 people from my constituency to attend a black-tie dinner. I want to say to the people in this House that I wrote back to them and I said: "I am sorry, if I ask my constituents to go to a black-tie dinner, it is going to cost them too much money because they will all have to go out and rent tuxedos. I do not intend to put them through that cost."

That is the mentality that has taken over at the same time as the number of cases of people who are having difficulty, facing hardship, who cannot even get a place to live, facing homelessness, struggling by on a minimum wage, single mothers—I could go through the list—plus the dilemma of south versus north and of visible minorities versus others. That is the reality of the Ontario economy. It is not the glitz, the showbiz and who can wear his tuxedo six days a week instead of seven days a week. That is not what is important in Ontario today.

What is important is not simply reaching out and touching someone. The Liberal Party had its own charitable fund-raising event and it sent all the proceeds down to a food bank. For all I know, it was a black-tie affair. I do not know, but what I do know is that view of the world—reach out and touch someone—when you put it in its true political and social context, is that of a government that is, frankly, neglecting some of the basic problems.

We do not just need entrepreneurship taught at grade 1; we need compassion. We need a party, a government, a society that understands the meaning of justice and that understands we are not always going to have great good times and that the important thing to do when the times are good is to make sure that money is distributed in a way that is fair and to make sure opportunities are built in there for the future and that we can look with pride on a productive economy that rewards work; not cleverness, not wealth, not advantage, but work.

1640

I think of the people in my constituency as I talk now. I think of the men and women who have worked very hard since they left school when they were 13 or 14 or 15. I think of the people who came from Italy and from Portugal to make this their home and may have left school when they were 12 or 13. They have worked hard. They have built this city; they have built the sewers; they have built the roads. They have built this city and made it what it is today. I think of the women who have worked in the needle trades hard, long hours, 10 and 12 hours a day, and they make \$150, \$200 or \$225 a week.

If one thing goes wrong in their lives, if one of them gets cancer, if one of them gets injured on the job, if one little thing goes out—pow, on the poverty line. If they cannot pay their property tax for a year in the city of York, they come into my office and ask: "What can I do? Can you help me?" They have worked hard. Work has been the meaning of their lives. It has been the one thing which gives them a sense of pride and which they try to instil in their children.

When I look at the lifestyles, the condos of the rich and famous, and I look at *Elegance* magazine and think of what is happening in this province of ours, I say to myself, "Something is wrong with a society that lets that kind of thing just go on." I say it is not government that reaches out to the greatest number, because that is utterly fatuous and meaningless. It does not mean anything. You can reach out to *Elegance* magazine and reach out with a little welfare cheque here and say, "I have done it all now, I have done my bit, I have reached out," to which we can only say, "You have not dealt with the problem."

The poet Eliot asks the question, and he puts in this way, "When the stranger asks, 'What is the meaning of this city?' what will we answer? We huddle together to make money from each other, or this is a community?" To me, that has always been one of the most eloquent expressions of the contrast between the society that is and the one my party was established to try to build. The government which governs best is the government which best strengthens the bonds of fellowship and community and which best advances the interests of ordinary people. That is my definition of a government that governs best. It may not be Scoop's, but it is mine.

When the stranger asks, "What is the meaning of this city?" are we simply here to make money from each other? If one listens to the throne speech, one would have that impression. The foundation of the throne speech is still: "Go out and make money. Entrepreneurialism, we will teach that in the schools. We will instil that as the fundamental value in our school system. That will be the spiritual education we will provide. That will be the moral and spiritual basis of our educational system." It is a sort of Max Weber view of the foundation of capitalism.

I cannot think of a narrower, more cramped, basically more Babbitt-like vision for the future of this country. It is a vision which may have some plausibility, but it is one that, frankly, does not do anything for me, and I do not think it does anything for a great many people in this province

who see a different challenge and a different set of choices. If we believe that we are not huddling together because we want to make money off each other, but because we are trying to establish a community, then government will take a different course. Government would certainly take a different course from the one it has set out in the speech from the throne.

In conclusion, two years ago we attempted to do what I thought was, in the circumstances, the honourable thing. We made an effort to change government because I felt and our party felt that was what people had decided to do, but to change it on certain conditions. I spent some time at the beginning of this speech outlining what those conditions were. I am sorry the Premier was not here today as, in the light of the courtesies we normally exchange on these occasions, I had hoped he would be, although I noticed that he was not here today and yesterday.

I took some time at the beginning to say precisely what it is that the Premier, the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, agreed to do two years ago. I have told the House what I believe to be true, and that is that the real agenda for this parliament remains that accord, that there is a great deal of unfinished work still to be done. It would keep us going flat out for some time to come, just on the basis of that.

In my own way, I have attempted to respond to what I think is, to put it mildly, a very inadequate, mundane, extraordinarily cautious and platitudinous view of what the realities of life are today in Ontario. I attempted to contrast that with something of the anger and frustration and, yes, love for this province that is felt by the people whom I and my colleagues represent.

I want to say this to the Premier, who is not here: If he decides that he will break his word, which he has given—there is no ambiguity, no question about it; he is breaking his word—and call an election before the end of the term he agreed to, I must say that is a challenge which I accept, which we accept.

He has referred to me, I presume, and to members of my party, as "frightened rats." I gather that was the expression the Premier used the other day in a press conference in London. We all use such language from time to time. If that is how he chooses to describe those of us who happen to believe that once we have given our word, it is a pretty good idea to try to keep it, let him choose to use that language.

I want to say to the Premier, as directly as I can, that we think that period of stability to achieve reform is important and has been

important. But let me also say, if he wants to have an election, we will take up that challenge. We will go to every constituency and we will talk. As we talked in the last election about the agenda, we will talk about the agenda for the next campaign and we will talk about the agenda of reform that matters to the working people, the ordinary people of this province. We will talk to the family of Ontario in ways that we think will move it, in ways that we think make sense and in ways that speak to the best that is in our future. If that is the choice the Premier makes, that is a challenge we are more than ready to accept.

Mr. Epp: I would like to begin by congratulating the mover and the seconder of the speech from the throne as honourable friends and colleagues who have represented their constituents and this government most proficiently in the carrying-out of this very important honour. Indeed, the member for York East (Ms. Hart), the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr. McGuigan) and their respective constituencies are testimony to the tremendous diversity which this province enfolds and which this government embraces.

This speech from the throne is one which I too proudly endorse on behalf of both this government of which I am a member and the constituents of Waterloo North whom I represent.

1650

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order.

Mr. Epp: They are welcome to join us. A few of them have joined us, one by one. They are welcome to come over.

In building on the previous speech from the throne introduced last year, our new agenda continues on a clear course of long-needed social and economic reform exercised in the spirit of fiscal responsibility.

Before touching on a number of aspects to this year's speech from the throne that are of particular importance to me because of their positive impacts on the region I represent, I would first like to respond to some of the comments made by the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the third party over the past two days.

We have been told by the honest and capable members of the opposition that the speech from the throne is vague in its promises and lacking in substance. I found these comments very intriguing, to say the least. Now, I know that, traditionally, speeches from the throne are relatively general in their focus and are usually

followed by budgets detailing the specifics of the ideologies and the programs put forth. However, I thought I might investigate these allegations made by the opposition by looking at what others across the province are saying after the reading of the speech from the throne just a week ago. What I found were a number of reports which, by and large, just did not jibe with the unsubstantiated criticisms put forth by the members opposite.

Let me look at a few examples. I want to quote from the London Free Press of April 29 which said, "In a speech far more specific than the usual generalities"—usual generalities after 42 years—"used for legislative openings, the Liberals offered specific programs for almost all segments of society." The Kitchener-Waterloo Record on April 29 said, "The speech prepared by the Liberals indicates that the province will have active government."

From the Windsor Star of the same date, it says, "As a blueprint for the future, the direction of the throne speech is admirable." From the Hamilton Spectator of the same date, "The speech was more specific than most in spelling out the government's objectives." From the Toronto Star, "This was the throne speech of a minority government that aims at being socially responsible and fiscally cautious."

Even the Sudbury Star of the same date, my colleagues, said, "The program, if backed with the necessary financial support and geared to do what the government says it intends, is ambitious."

That is what these very objective newspapers from across the province have indicated as a result of the speech from the throne offered only a week ago today, and my friend the member for Sudbury East can attest to that.

Mr. Martel: Tell me when they have been objective?

Mr. Epp: I am confident that we will follow through on our commitments and again deliver just as we did on our 1986 speech from the throne commitments.

Mr. Pollock: Tell us about the washrooms.

Mr. Epp: I am going to come to that. I am glad the member mentioned it.

I know that only yesterday the Leader of the Opposition was in a dither about the fact that all those washrooms had not been built along Highway 401, and this was the major segment of his speech yesterday. The few washrooms—how many were they?—50, 100 or 200 washrooms that were going to be built along the 401 were not in place, so when he drove down the 401 he could not relieve himself at the proper time and place. I

know the Leader of the Opposition devoted at least 10 minutes to this particular segment of his speech yesterday. I want to tell members that this problem will be addressed in a proper time and place.

Mr. Martel: What about unemployment in Sudbury? Talk to me about that.

Mr. Epp: As I indicated, it will be addressed.

As I stated earlier, the speech from the throne built on the many reforms and initiatives already introduced by this government over the last two years. In our continued drive towards excellence on a number of fronts, I am sure my colleague the member for Wellington South (Mr. Ferraro) would agree that this government's plan to create a world-class centre for advancement of agriculture in Guelph is, indeed, an honourable intention. It will be carried out.

The cause for rejoicing should not be limited to only those in our region of the province, for our decision to move the Ministry of Agriculture and Food closer to an already well-established and excellent university, namely the University of Guelph, will eventually be of great benefit not only to those residents of Guelph but also to the residents in all parts of this province and, indeed, to other parts of the country.

Although the Leader of the Opposition chose to ignore it in his remarks yesterday, the ministry has already built a top-notch food testing laboratory in Guelph and has greatly enhanced our pesticides testing laboratory that is currently second to none.

In addition, other initiatives, such as further improvements to our successful family farm interest rate reduction program, which the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) has initiated, provide ample evidence that this government will continue to assist Ontario's agricultural sector to weather the storm of agricultural market instability currently being experienced by farmers across this province and across this country.

This throne speech also realizes the importance of converting our short-term economic strengths into long-term economic strategies. In this light, the throne speech promises to improve our ability to compete in the international marketplace.

By the way, one such avenue where we intend to achieve this is through a better-trained work force. My friend from Sudbury mentioned the unemployment they have in Sudbury, and that is the most unfortunate aspect. There are pockets of that in the province. This government is trying to

address those problems but cannot address everything within a two-year period.

My colleague the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara) will be introducing a bold new program for apprenticeship training which will address the need, long neglected by the former government, to fill the demand for many skilled positions with tradespeople of our province.

Our Premier has also shown leadership by promising to establish an industrial restructuring commissioner to assist workers and industries facing plant closures or major layoffs. This is something that was mentioned in the throne speech and which the member for York South (Mr. Rae) indicated was missing from the throne speech. There has been mention made. As members know, it is a general document not dealing with a lot of specifics, which will be coming, of course, in the budget and in other pronouncements by this government.

Again, in today's climate of increasingly volatile economic conditions, our workers must be apprised of the factors affecting their employment in advance of their occurrence, to minimize the potentially negative consequences such changes may have on them and on their families.

In recognizing the tremendous underdeveloped entrepreneurial potential throughout our province, I salute the Premier in his mission to further promote and develop our entrepreneurial talents. In this light, I look forward with anticipation to the announcement of details of a program of chairs of entrepreneurship for post-secondary institutions. Having two of these post-secondary institutions in my own riding of Waterloo North, I can fully appreciate that many positive benefits will come from this initiative.

1700

Unlike the unrealistic and, I would say, unacceptable proposal of the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) to line everybody's pockets with gold, I know the Treasurer has already been working with his federal and provincial counterparts to harmonize the federal and provincial tax systems to ensure the Ontario economy's competitiveness while maintaining our commitment to the maintenance of fundamental social programs.

As the parliamentary assistant to the Treasurer and Minister of Revenue, I fully embrace our government's commitment to continue the building of a strong tax system which supports growth. I know my colleague the Treasurer awaits the federal government's white paper on tax reform, due next month, with great anticipa-

tion. I know all of us are looking forward to receiving this document, even the "minister for resign." Is that not what they used to say? I think that is a new portfolio we created about four years ago for him.

Interjections.

Mr. Epp: My friends across the way are interrupting me, and they are doing a fairly good job. Nevertheless, I know they are very supportive of the tremendous document that was tabled last week, known as the throne speech, and I know they are awaiting their opportunity to speak to it.

Mr. Martel: What document? Was there a document tabled last week?

Mr. Epp: It was read. The member must have been sleeping.

Proposed changes to systems for personal income tax, corporate income tax and federal manufacturers' tax, sales tax, will be studied with close scrutiny to ensure the best interests of Ontario's taxpayers are protected.

Finally, if the leader of the official opposition wants to talk about conflicting messages with respect to trade negotiations, he can look no further than his own party's conflicting statements on the issue, and primarily his own statements. In December 1985, he supported the efforts undertaken by the Premier of this province, my leader, and the government at the conference in Halifax to ensure a fair deal for Ontario.

The leader of the official opposition stated at that time, "We have no difficulty in supporting and sharing the concerns which the Premier so forcefully and articulately expressed." That is what he said.

However, in October 1986, guess what he said? The leader of the official opposition stated: "Here in Ontario, the Premier is trying deliberately to sabotage the talks. He is using wild ideas and figures as scare tactics."

Can members believe that? Absolutely nobody believes that, not even the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick, the leader of the official opposition.

Where is he? He is not here. But the leader of the official opposition stated: "Here in Ontario, the Premier is trying deliberately to sabotage the talks. He is using wild ideas and figures as scare tactics."

Can you imagine? The Premier uses certain figures, he understands the deliberations and the imbalances across the province and across this country, he understands the various figures involved, he has discussed the law of trade

negotiations with them, and he is using scare tactics with respect to this whole matter?

The people of Ontario want to know what is going on. He is giving them a great deal of information, but certainly only what he is able to get from Mr. Mulroney and the Conservatives in Ottawa, since they are fairly tight-lipped on what is going on.

In November 1986, the Leader of the Opposition flipped again, saying that total free trade with the United States is "not a realistic option for Ontario or for Canada" and "represents a price that nobody is prepared to pay." That is what the leader of the official opposition said in November 1986. There you have it.

This government, by the way, will continue to play a forceful and constructive role in addressing all the issues involved in the United States-Canadian trade negotiations. The Premier has stated that we believe it is essential to the future of Ontario to look at the practical advantages and disadvantages to freer trade. We must look at the pros and cons of freer trade.

Mr. Warner: On a point of order, does the Speaker see a quorum?

The Acting Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1706

The Deputy Speaker: A quorum being present, I recognize the member for Waterloo North.

Mr. Epp: The leader of the official opposition, in his infinite wisdom, suggests that we should prepare plans for an impending transition period when trade barriers begin to come down and some of our industries and regions will require adjustment assistance. US trade officials have made it perfectly clear that they seek a level playing field, one that would restrict such incentives or subsidies to specific sectors or regions. If this represents the honourable member's idea of planning for the future, then the Almighty help us all, particularly his Conservative friends in Ottawa with regard to this matter. Certainly, that is the kind of knowledgeable advice the leader of Canada does not need.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Premier and the government for introducing an ambitious new agenda for Ontario, an agenda which will revitalize our institutions and programs to serve the people of Ontario for many years. In this light, I am also confident that the members opposite will find the upcoming budget of the Treasurer an equally impressive document, should they allow us the opportunity to introduce it on the date the Treasurer has indicated.

Mr. Ashe: It is really difficult to know how to put into a relatively few words the comments about a 49-page document of diatribe, cynicism and platitudes. As a matter of fact, it would appear to me that to really do justice to that document would take considerably more time than I am prepared to invest in it.

One of the things I wanted to put on the record first—frankly, I was not going to start this way, but the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp) put on the record a couple of editorials, at least selected parts of editorials, from parts of the province, where I would suggest it would be difficult to figure there would be anything other than the kind of editorial that was in place. So I dug out one that I am going to refer to in parts, as he did—which, frankly, is not fair on my part, nor on his—but for the matter of saving time I will just put part of it on the record.

This happens to be one from a very local newspaper, not the one that usually leaks all the government information in advance—I acknowledge that—but one that is very closely domiciled, not too far away from that particular one; it is called the *Toronto Sun*.

It starts out, "Throne Pitch." That is probably a good headline. It is a pitch; a 49-page pitch, mind, but a pitch nevertheless. "Have the Liberals ever got something for you, and you, and you.... Think of it, a speech from the throne with 157 promises. And no focus." Those are the two key words: no focus. There is nothing behind it; there is no substance. There is no focus for any of the 157 promises and the other 45-odd pages, because one could have written all the promises on four.

Another selected paragraph: "We should count ourselves lucky there weren't 9.1 million promises—one for each Ontarian." Can you imagine how long that document would have been?

Of course, this is the one that I know would touch the heart of that great socialist, the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio), who is the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, "There are touches of cradle-to-grave socialism." I know he is a great socialist at heart and must have felt great when he read that one.

"We really don't know what to shoot at or praise because since the kitchen sink is in there along with everything else, who could tell what they are serious about and what's window dressing?"

Indeed, those relatively few words sum up that particular document.

I know it is customary to use the throne speech debate to talk about many of the issues and problems in your own constituency—and I will allude to a couple of those—but frankly, I will be tying them in directly to this particular document called the speech from the throne, contrary to, I suppose, many members.

As I go along, I would like to make very specific references to some pages in this document. On page 1, "The previous throne speech set forth an agenda for the next decade." We know some of the results of that decade over the last year, and it sure leaves an awful lot for the next nine years, which I hope that government will not be in a position to have to worry about delivering.

"While our overall economic outlook is favourable, we must convert short-term economic strengths into long-term economic stability."

Read that as—and I will read it: on the basis that we got lots of extra income, which the opposition told us last year we would have, we have been able to hand out willy-nilly, in these times, nearly \$1 billion—possibly it will be more than \$1 billion by the time we hear the final fiscal year figures—so we can build possible other longevity for this party in the future.

That is the way it really reads.

"Regardless of the outcome of bilateral trade talks with the United States, we must fortify our capacity to compete in the international marketplace." I will be referring to that particular one at a later time in this document, because there is a little more substance on the bones to that one.

It is cynical coming from a government that has done everything to undermine the freer trade talks; and a Premier who has not put the facts on the record at all or stood up to be counted on this particular issue, one of the most important issues before this country and, of course, this province today.

"My government will direct priority attention to the following areas"—then it goes on and on—and "we will seek to attain these goals in a fiscally responsible manner, because the people of Ontario wish to leave their children with the flexibility they will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow."

What great cynicism. There was approximately an extra \$1 billion in revenue in the past year, but will the government be using that in a substantive way to cut down or even eliminate the operating deficit? Maybe it will: the operating deficit, nothing to do with the rest of the actual fiscal deficit. Even having an operating deficit at a time when the economy is strong does not leave

anything for the future to take care of the challenges of tomorrow and to leave our children with flexibility.

We all know, those of us who attempt to be fiscally responsible from time to time, if we cannot set aside when things are rosy, when the rainy day comes the cup is empty. That is the way that cynical government is operating.

"In these and all matters my government is mindful of the fact that it is the servant of the people. We will continue to provide government that is as open and fair, as caring and compassionate as the people of Ontario."

Cynicism. Just in the last couple of days we have asked many questions of importance to the people of Ontario. When the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) was asked, when the Premier was asked, when the Attorney General was asked about documents, about investigations on some wrongdoings or alluded wrongdoings by people associated with this government, did that open government tell us anything? No. It chose not to. Yet it has the audacity to stand up and say, "We will be open and fair and caring and compassionate."

"We will be guided by the principle that the government which governs best is the government that reaches out to the greatest number of people." There is no doubt about that one at all. All things to all people: that is what this speech attempts to do. There is no doubt it is attempting to touch all people: touch them in the pocket-book, not touch them in any other way that is meaningful or caring or open at all.

I go on, to page 7: "Schools are an invaluable community resource." I do not think anybody would debate that one. That is pretty clear and I think we can all subscribe to that. "They are education and recreation facilities, child care and community centres."

I agree with the "community centres" concept. As a matter of fact, many progressive municipalities in this province have sat down with the school boards and said, "These buildings we all put our moneys into, whether as provincial taxpayers or as local property taxpayers, are not being fully utilized by the schools. They are closed an awful lot in the summer and they do not get fully utilized on the weekends; let us put them to community uses." This has been a very frugal way for two levels of government, in this case municipal government along with the elected school trustees, to get more use out of the tax dollars.

But I do not remember seeing anything in there about the schools being used as a baby-sitting

service. That, frankly, is what I think is in this. I am not sure that the senior citizens in my municipality are going to be very pleased with having to provide baby-sitting services to the children of the community. That is what is suggested in here. That is cynicism. That is cynicism to the nth degree.

1720

"My government will take steps to reduce the drop-out rate in Ontario by one third within the next five years." I know that the leader of our party and the leader of the third party made direct references to that as well, so I suppose it would have been very easy for me to pass over it. I think everyone who responds to this document will have to refer to that one. What a goal. What a goal to suggest that a 22 per cent drop-out rate is an enviable task and an enviable goal for this government. Frankly, with those kinds of goals, we do not have to worry about the results.

Imagine if they had the opportunity—and again we hope they will not—to look back five years from now and say: "We got that 33 per cent down to 25 per cent. We did not quite reach our goal of 22 per cent, but we got it down to 25 per cent." You should make goals that are not attainable and then you can say, "We did not quite get it down to zero, which is where we would all like it, but it is now only seven, eight or nine per cent." When you are aiming for 22 per cent and miss, what have you accomplished? Nothing at all.

"We will tailor the curriculum for students enrolled in general and basic level courses to foster a desire to stay in school...." That is like saying, "Are you or are you not in favour of motherhood?" I think we would all agree that we are. I think we want to do everything to encourage students to stay in school. If this is the total initiative of the Minister of Education to entice students to remain in school, then we will not even have to worry about his keeping at the 33 per cent level, let alone dropping down to 22 per cent.

Of course, we are also fully aware of the other initiatives he tried to put across to suggest that we have to get back to basics; that we have to have a common denominator for weighing success; that we have to upgrade the secondary students so they go into the post-secondary system, whether into community colleges or universities, at a standard and at a level that will allow them to accept that other level of education. He suggested that we are maybe going to go back to creating a common denominator; maybe to some kind of testing.

I will read another editorial. This one happens to be from the one that has all the government's leaks, the local Liberal paper entitled the *Toronto Star*. This is an editorial headed "Timid Response to Call for Tests".

"Education Minister Sean Conway proved himself to be a political dunce last week when he tried to convince the Legislature"—he must have thought we were all that way rather than the author—"that Ontario is about to institute province-wide testing of students. He has done nothing of the sort."

I could read the whole thing, because none of it is very complimentary, but I will drop down to the last paragraph, for the benefit of saving time.

"Conway's hide-and-seek style of educational leadership, particularly on the issue of testing, is inadequate. He gets an F for originality." He deserves an F for more than originality.

One of the things, though, which I will give him credit for—more than a passing mark for—is that he has taken a new level of whatever in announcing the capital grants the other day. We are starting now to hear from the odd member about some of those announcements. Some of them were maybe rather cynical. Some of them kind of fudged the numbers, so to speak. I will be very frank and I will put it on the record: we did not do too badly out our way.

I happen to be in one of the areas surrounding Metropolitan Toronto that has had the majority of the growth in and around Metro in the last number of years. Obviously, I am talking about Peel, York and Durham. My constituency happens to be in Durham. Probably we got our share, which is not sufficient, but I think we can all agree, regardless of where we are coming from, that there will never be enough.

With an outstanding capital request of more than \$1 billion, less than \$250 million still leaves a big shortfall. It is an increase but still leaves the greatest outstanding capital requirement that has ever been on the record. In case the government feels that it should stand up and take all the bows and kudos, that it has solved all the problems by a reasonable little increase in the capital funding, it still has left the largest outstanding obligation and request of school boards throughout this province in history, something approaching \$800 million.

Where does he get an A? Where does he qualify for an A rather than the F given to him by the *Toronto Star*? I alluded to this yesterday, or attempted to do so, on a matter of privilege. Even though the Speaker, who was in the chair at the time, disagreed with my conclusion, I still feel it

is a matter of privilege; not only my privilege in this case but of any and all members of this Legislature.

How were these announced? I agree that it would have been quite normal to have a representative—the minister, I would hope, his parliamentary assistant or a senior member of the Ministry of Education—come out to the various areas involved. We are all politicians. We know the government wants to make some hay out of this. I have no problem with that. Frankly, we did the same thing when we were the government. You go out and make these announcements and hope you get some press coverage. But I will be honest; I am sure that in our whole 42 years—and I know for sure in the eight years I was on the government side—we never did it in such a cynical, dishonest way.

What happened? The minister's parliamentary assistant came out to the region of Durham and had a press conference for selected media. That in itself is atrocious. I cannot prove this, but there seemed to be an indication that if there was a local paper that maybe did not go along with the government line 100 per cent, it got on the wrong list and did not get invited. Those media can speak for themselves, and I am sure in this week's paper they will do exactly that.

They were going out to talk about capital funding for school boards. Did they invite the local elected members of the Legislature in Durham? Did the New Democratic member for Oshawa or the three Conservative members in Durham get an invitation to this press conference? Again, it is fine for the government member to stand up and announce it. I have no problem with that; that is the process. No, we were not invited at all. I heard about it only from hearsay and third parties.

Seeing that they were going to announce capital construction for schools, one would think they would contact the school boards in question and, in this case, invite the senior administrative people of those two school boards; they would invite the elected trustees to come out and hear the good news. Did that happen? No. It was an announcement for capital funding for school boards; neither administrators nor the elected trustees of the school boards were invited. The local elected members of the Legislature were not invited. I presume the federal members were not invited, and quite rightly; but now we find the school boards were not even invited.

Mr. Speaker, do you know who was invited? It just so happens that there are some Liberal candidates out there who are duly nominated for

the next election. Lo and behold, the Liberal candidate in my constituency, for example, happened to be front and centre right at the time the announcements were being made.

I can honestly say that in my eight years opposite we were never that cynical. Sure, we made the announcements as the government. That is the process. I have no problem with the parliamentary assistant coming out and giving the good news—none at all. But when you get an invitation list that excludes the elected members and the school boards and includes only the nominated Liberal candidates, that is spitting in the face of the electorate in our area and indeed that abrogates all the privileges of the members of this House.

1730

Mr. Speaker, as you can see, I feel very strongly on this issue. Frankly, I would hope that all members of this Legislature should feel very strongly about that cynicism, but there I have to give an A—the member might feel he deserves it—an A for political results. The media out in my area looks upon it a little differently. The people in Durham, not only in my constituency the people of Durham, are going to hear exactly what happened and I hope, eventually, will find out why it happened.

I will pass on to another issue on page 14 of this lengthy document: “My government is committed to the principle that all people in Ontario should be able to live independently for as long as possible.” I know what that is suggesting and I support that principle. I think it is great if people can be maintained in their own homes as much as possible, but it is funny that out in my area—and I think in most places in the province—I have some people who are very young who do not have a family yet; or more important, the people I think we are talking about here, seniors who have had their families. Their families have been born and brought up; they have been educated and they are now out on their own; they have married or moved on. Frankly, this is cynicism to the nth degree.

This Legislature, sponsored by the government, passed a certain section in Bill 7 not that long ago. I will not get into all the highlights of Bill 7 today. The main one, as we all know, was the sexual orientation section, which I vehemently opposed and still to this day oppose; but there was another section in there that said that people could not have a place to live at the time when their children have gone and they might like a little freedom from having children in their building. Believe it or not, that is illegal. Even as

a home owner in a condominium corporation that is illegal; and they have the audacity to even mention it, albeit indirectly.

As more and more people are aware of that section of Bill 7, I am now getting more letters and phone calls on that one. They will never total the ones I got on sexual orientation, that is for sure, but that is where I am getting them now. People in that age group are mad, and quite rightly so, at this government for that kind of a situation.

Sure, we all agree that having family housing is a necessity. There is no problem with that at all, that is a nonissue; but to suggest that it is also inappropriate for people as they get a little older—and they do not have to be senior in the context of being 70 and 80 years old; some people whose families are grown up before they are 60 figure they have done their duty in parenting and have their right, and, in my view it is their right, to be able to have freedom in a building that is not full of children. I am speaking as a parent who had four, so I am not talking about something of which I am not fully aware. There are three still at home, I might say.

“My government will inaugurate a major campaign to promote healthy lifestyles among all Ontario citizens.” That is very laudable indeed. It sure would have read funny if it had said, “My government will inaugurate a major campaign to promote unhealthy lifestyles among all Ontario citizens.” I think we could all have got up in arms over that one. Again, I think we have motherhood repeated over and over again.

“We will act to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption.” If there has ever been inconsistency, if there has ever been cynicism displayed, if there has ever been anything that is so completely opposite to what certain ministers of the crown get up and say on a fairly regular basis, that is it. How can one talk about acting to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption and be the party that proposed—and I am sure it is still on the bottom end of the agenda—beer and wine in the corner stores? How can one have a party that says it wants to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption at the same time as it is extending all the operating rules for licensed, and probably eventually unlicensed establishments? What cynicism indeed.

Here is another platitude, and we can all agree with this one too: “Safe drinking water and clean air are major and essential components of public health protection.” Wow; that deserved two lines, no doubt about that at all.

We are getting there. There are only 49 pages and we are on page 26, so we have only 23 to go. "We recently announced a comprehensive package of new auto insurance legislation." I can only laugh as I read this one. "Among other provisions, the program will cap auto insurance premiums and establish a public review process under which insurance rates must be justified."

I have no problem with the last part. I think it is well past time that there be an agency—let us use the comparison of the Ontario Energy Board—where companies would go forward and present their reason or their substantiation of rate increases. Alternatively, that board would also have the right to call in companies to substantiate the reasoning behind their rates and would have the opportunity ultimately to say yea or nay to those rates.

But the comprehensive package of new auto insurance legislation does not do a thing. They are talking about 10 per cent rollbacks when, in fact, in some of these instances, 50 per cent rollbacks would be more in order if you looked on it in a more rational way. What this is is a knee-jerk reaction to a proposal that caught a little steam from the socialist party. I give them credit for that. I do not agree with the policy, but at least they are consistent. At least they do not react in a knee-jerk way as the minister over there did.

Mr. Warner: Calm and reason.

Mr. Ashe: It is calm and reason in the member's perspective; and I agree with that, that is fine.

I imagine on this one the minister has to feel embarrassed, because it was only a day or two before he made all these great nonannouncements that he was suggesting the free enterprise system should be able to carry on and not have government interference, let alone government insurance. Obviously, that particular announcement he had to get up and choke on was written by others and came out of the front corner office.

I am not too sure he agrees, but I know that, as part of the executive council, if he does not read those things when they are put in his hands he has an option—which he may end up doing, by the way. I noticed he had a good tan, so maybe he was away practising more freedom by considering his resignation from the executive council.

That was a very cynical response to the socialist proposal, although I do not support in any way the idea that the government should run the auto insurance business. There are very few things, if anything—nothing comes to mind, frankly—that the government in the long run—you

can sure pick the particular point in time or you can pick a particular situation where you can say, "Hey, it is better or it is cheaper"; but in the long run, anything that government runs is more expensive, either in the case of rates, in this case, or on the back of the taxpayer, which is the only other alternative. You can fudge the numbers, as they have been wont to do in some other jurisdictions, or you can bury deficits, but in the real world out there it has to be paid for. There is no other way of doing it.

If we had been really realistic and not talked about this ridiculous freezing of a rate, which meant nothing—I have had people phoning and phoning insurance agents and brokers and insurance companies and our office looking for their rebate cheques. It has nothing to do with that at all. What it says is that the rate you got when you renewed the last time around is frozen for now, even if it went into effect yesterday, and it is frozen for the next year.

But does it address the problem? If there is a problem, and frankly there is one within the underwriting procedure for automobile insurance these days, it is the fact of assuming that people are guilty before they are proved to be guilty. In other words, the companies, in my view, should be looking upon the whole underwriting of risks in the way our basic system of justice is meted out.

In my view, it is my understanding—and I am not a lawyer, I am not as learned as the Attorney General thinks he is—but in fact you are innocent until you are proved guilty, so why not underwrite insurance risks on that basis? Because you happen to be 23 does not necessarily suggest that you are the worst driver in the world, which is what the groups in that category come up with. That is the rational, reasonable and thought-out approach, not the knee-jerk approach that was alluded to in the throne speech.

1740

Yes, the government has companies justify their rates. Yes, it has a type of an Ombudsman who can be the go-between for the insurance companies and the policyholder when there are problems. But more important, it sits down with the industry and says: "Hey, you have a perception problem. You are able to prove you have a financial problem. We will tackle some of those with you. We will take care of the situation of no fault, for example. We are going to continue to look at that. We will take away, we hope, some of the court costs associated with settling claims. We are going to work with you and sit down to deal with the extraordinary repair

costs when they are covered by insurance companies." That is alluded to in here as well, but surely the main principle is already in law that would suggest that you are innocent until you have shown that you are no longer innocent, you have a bad driving record. In my view that is the way to solve the problem for many of those people who feel, quite rightly, they are paying an unjustifiably high premium.

Last year the government established a Premier's Council to steer Ontario into the forefront of economic leadership and technological innovation. It is pretty hard to criticize some of the people who are on that council. They are high-profile people, and that is quite right.

If I have any criticism about this particular route, it is twofold. One, it was appointed last year and I do not think it has done anything yet except spend some money on studies by, I think, an American consultant, which would seem to suggest that there are no brains left here in Canada, something I do not subscribe to at all. Two, it seems to me the cabinet, the respective ministers and the Premier are abrogating their responsibilities to setting an agenda for the needs of the future and for the betterment of this province.

Of course, with the shemozzle that came out of last year's billion-dollar nonannouncement for the high-technology sector, maybe that is why it was necessary to get some outside advice. There have been enough references to that, and the various issues that have come out of that whole sector in the past year, maybe, to prove that the government is a little thin in terms of rational specifics.

Page 31: "While reinforcing the strengths of leading sectors, such as automotive and steel, my government will continue to assist major industries that are facing serious economic pressures." That is great, except that I read into that: our position on a freer trade agreement is inconsistent and we move from day to day on what that position is, but we will talk to some of these leading sectors, such as automobile and steel; which would be two sectors, of course, that would be significantly impacted, in my view, in a positive way by a reasonably and responsibly negotiated freer trade agreement.

If I have a real concern about the dishonesty on this issue as put out by the Premier, and frankly by the third party and the union leaders throughout this province, it is suggesting that the present auto pact is something that is written in stone and that if it is put up on a pedestal the problem will go away. We can look at the other

two thirds of the trade between Canada and the United States and forget about that third, because it happens to be to our benefit at the moment. In my view, where the dishonesty comes in is not putting it out freely and clearly when we are coming to that conclusion that we are not talking about something that is written in stone.

What we are talking about is an agreement that was entered into in good faith a couple of decades ago that has from time to time had advantages to both countries and, I suggest, over the total period of the auto pact has had mutual advantages to both countries on a cumulative and collective basis and that upon 12 months' notice can be cancelled or opened for renegotiation if it can be reached.

For those who put out that alternative in their view about, "Oh, do not talk about the auto pact," why do they not say that? It is fine to suggest we do not like to have to tamper with it because we are the beneficiaries of it right now and have been in the last few years. That is fine. That is a fact. But do not suggest that by having it out of the agreement it will carry on in its present form for ever, because that is not the way it is written.

I also do not think the Premier has carried on a leadership role in any way. He alludes to the freer trade and free trade discussions a couple of times throughout this document in a very loose way, but that has been the policy. It has to be loose so one can pick whatever side one happens to be on that day.

We are talking about industries. We have the greatest opportunity in the history of this country for Ontario to be the major benefactor of a freer trade agreement. We do not have an option of just walking away from the table, which is what some of the union leaders, the Ontario Federation of Labour and the New Democratic Party federally and provincially suggest: The status quo will just carry on if we walk away from the table. That is alluded to in this speech as well; being on both sides of the issue at the same time. That is not a reasonable or viable option.

When one looks at the trade problem they have in the United States with a cash deficit in the last two years of more than \$300 billion, both in goods and services in their world trade, one sees that they have a problem and they have to solve that problem. Protectionism is growing. As both houses in the United States went over to the Democrats, that became an even greater issue and a more growing problem for all the trading countries that do business with the US.

When one goes and meets with these people, one realizes and understands their problem. They must and they will do something about it. They do not want to retaliate, other than a few exceptions where they have some problems with our policies, such as—again we will get into the shingles and shakes and the softwood issue and so on. They have some problems sometimes with our steel industry, which is a very major exporter to the United States. We can compete in those industries and they do not mind competing on a level playing field. They do not really even have a problem with the differential in our dollar, as long as it sticks roughly in the present range.

When they solve their problems through legislation, we are going to be affected negatively. The only way we can avoid that is to come up with an agreement that is to our mutual advantage. The status quo is not an option. I would think that the Premier of the province that has the most to gain and the most to lose if we do not get an agreement would be standing up yelling and screaming front and centre, encouraging the negotiations and not being a hinder to those negotiations in a very negative way. He should put out the facts as they are and then stand up and be counted.

"My government will continue to play a forceful and constructive role in addressing all of the issues involved in the US-Canada trade negotiations, and voice its strong concerns about the potential impact an unfavourable agreement could have on all Canadians."

I do not think that this government and this Premier have been doing that in a very honest way. If they want to put out the issue, that is fine, but put out all the facts and all the options, including the no-free-trade-agreement option, which I suggest and emphasize can only be negative to this province.

"Ontario will establish a new trade and investment office in India to better represent our interests." Is that not a great initiative, to be able to expand our exports beyond the boundary of North America? I suggest more productive trade offices have been closed since this government came to office than will be generated in the next decade by opening a new trade and investment office in India.

1750

I have no problem with that. Any place where we expand our operations is positive, but we should put it into the context of the total world market. We should not close offices that have proved to be very beneficial in the past just so we can make an announcement that we are going to

open a new office in India. Wow; that is a real winner that one is.

There is no doubt that the constituency I represent is predominantly urban-based and growing all the time. I still have the honour and the privilege to represent an agricultural community in a significant part of my riding, both in my new one that I will be representing and in my old one that I still represent, because they are not that dissimilar.

When I read page 39 of this throne speech and get to "A Strengthened Agricultural Sector," I find that the response and the initiative are frankly laughable.

We really talk about the foundation of our whole economic system in Canada and a very important part of the economic community within Ontario—the farmer, the agricultural community, the processing, the packaging and the delivering of goods to our various grocery stores, etc. What is the initiative of this government?

"The city of Guelph will be reinforced"—it sure will—"as a world-class"—that is a good word and I think it is repeated something like 50 times in here.

Mr. Harris: Sixty-two.

Mr. Ashe: Is it 62? Pardon me; I underestimated. It will be a "world-class centre of excellence in agriculture and food, linking the best talent from private industry, government and the university sector. As part of this thrust, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will be transferred to Guelph."

Wowee. That is the initiative of this government to help solve the problems in the agricultural community in this province. As a matter of fact, the member for Waterloo North referred to an editorial in the London Free Press and how laudatory it was relative to the throne speech. It is funny, but he did not read an editorial from that same paper a day or two later when it was suggested that the support that was given by this throne speech to the very important agricultural sector was nonexistent and they were disappointed. The reaction from the farm community and their spokespersons suggested that the response by this government was nonexistent. Of course, they were right.

"We will require the provision of child care spaces in all new schools. We will work with municipalities and encourage them to require the provision of child care facilities in new commercial buildings." Yet it seems to me that in some other part of this speech I read that "a government

is for the people, and the best government interferes the least.”

They can put in that kind of statement suggesting that everybody, whether in the private sector or the public sector, will have to come to government with their proposals to include day care spaces. I have no problem with children. I do not think most people have a problem with children, but there is a time and a place for government to come and suggest it is the granddaddy of everybody and knows what is right, come what may.

Some of these things, believe it or not, cost money. The Minister of Community and Social Services is quite aware that all these things cost money. I am not sure that some of my constituents, particularly the seniors in my constituency, are prepared to pay more taxes to include these needed facilities within some of those particular public buildings.

I suggest that many kinds of encouragement to the private sector, whether private in the context of profit-making, which in my view is still not a dirty word even though it is to the third party, or in the context of the nonprofit day care sector, should encourage them—I think they can and have done a reasonably good job in the climate in which they have been operating—to fulfil their mandate and take care of the needs in this province.

I can tell the members what has happened in many municipalities. I saw it in my own area and I am sure we can all refer to similar experiences, particularly when dealing with the competitive nature of municipally owned day care centres compared with the private sector. What would happen? You would have a proposal coming forth to the council in question for a privately operated day care centre. They hoped, had in mind that they potentially might even make—that dirty word—a “profit.”

But you always had some members of council who would suggest: “No. They are going to compete with the municipally operated day care centre and that is where we want everybody to put their children. It has a brand-new, better building. It has a lot better toys and learning facilities; and besides that, because our members all belong to the Canadian Union of Public Employees, we pay them a lot more money so they obviously have to be better baby-sitters.”

I do not think they are necessarily any better. I am sure they are no worse; I am not suggesting that. Because it is in a more costly environment, in my view does not suggest they do the job any better.

We can encourage in many ways, and I encourage the minister. I was pleased that he stood up yesterday and answered that question in a very positive way, that he still supported the principle that the private sector could take care of some of our needs—not all; there is room for the nonprofit, for those sponsored through church organizations, etc. That is great, but I think the private sector can take care of a lot of the balance.

I do not think my taxpayers, particularly the seniors, whom we are all concerned about, should have to pay. They are concerned now about paying education taxes, period, and if they have to add to that the cost of putting day care centres in the schools so the schools can be not only educators but also baby-sitters, they are not going to be too pleased with that. I am going to make sure they understand that is the proposal of this government as to how it is going to spend their money, as it sees fit.

The throne speech talked about so-called “world-class” this and “world-class” that and how they are going to upgrade the transportation sector, etc. We had a little discussion last Thursday—again, no specifics; I am sure as we get closer to that day, 37 days prior to a certain event, we are going to have a lot more specifics about where there is going to be a couple of more lanes here or a new highway there. I hope that will include Highway 407, to which the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) referred. But I am not quite sure that is fully the answer either, because even when there are announcements they are so clouded with innuendoes and fuzzy dates and nondates that they do not mean a thing.

Highway 401 in my area needs expansion from the centre of Scarborough out into Durham region. We have problems there every day now. Last year, we had the second fastest growing municipality in the province; it happened to be the town in which I live. The minister makes an announcement that he is going to start the expansion two years from now, and we can plan for the ribbon cutting just before the turn of the century—not the decade, the century. That is not good enough. I hope we are going to see a little bit more in that regard.

I see that it is approaching six o'clock, so I would like to wind down.

Mr. Warner: Why wind down? Why do you not just resign?

Mr. Ashe: I have not heard that from you for a long time.

Mr. Warner: I have been saving it.

Mr. Ashe: I think it is very appropriate to go to the third last line of His Honour's address: “May

Divine Providence attend your deliberations.” Mr. Speaker, with this 49 pages, it will take more than Divine Providence, it will take divine intervention to make a lot of these come true in a fiscal and responsible manner and I do not think that government can do it.

On motion by Mr. Warner, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Wednesday, May 6, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, May 6, 1987

The House met at 3:02 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

ORDER OF ONTARIO

Mr. Harris: Today marks the first presentation of the Order of Ontario, an award established in the 1986 speech from the throne. Twenty outstanding Ontarians, out of 400 nominations, have been honoured today and members on this side of the House are pleased to have the opportunity to congratulate them for their achievements. The Order of Ontario gives us all a chance to thank them for their unique achievements, for the richness they have added to the life of our province and to show our pride in calling them Ontarians.

Achievers, whether in business, industry, science, the arts or as a volunteer to community services, are people who create the heart and spirit of a society. Twenty people are being recognized today, but they are not the only winners. Because of their dedication, their effort and their work, all Ontarians, indeed, are winners as well.

We are proud of all the recipients of the Order of Ontario. Obviously, we are especially proud of William Davis of Brampton, who has been included to be among the first to win this award. For a quarter of a century, this Legislature was witness to the dedication, energy and zeal of this remarkable Ontarian. William Davis once remarked that Ontario has never been spoiled by perfect government, but few would deny his genuine and sincere efforts to provide opportunity and a chance for success for all who make Ontario their home.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: Last night, I attended a forum on day care sponsored by the Hamilton and District Labour Council, and I want to put on record a conversation I heard between two profit-making day care operators. The man had evidently been in business some time and inquired of the newer enterpriser, a woman, how things were going in her operation.

"I guess things are still shaking down at your place," he said. "Yes," she said. "Staff?" he

asked. "Oh, no, no. I am fine with staff; no problems. It is some of those parents." "Oh, I know what you mean," he empathized. She went on: "But I think it is all sorted out now. I just said to them, 'Look, if you do not like the service we provide, go find yourself another day care centre.' That quieted them down pretty fast, let me tell you."

There are thousands of Ontario families who know that line. They are families who have tried to make sure an aged father or mother, aunt or uncle, get decent care, decent food and decent living conditions in the profit-making nursing homes of Ontario. We put almost \$300 million of public money into nursing homes last year and, try as we may, we cannot guarantee the quality of that service in the profit-making homes.

If we put public money into direct grants to profit-making day care, we are supporting day care service which is not accountable to the general public and not accountable to the users of the service, the families of Ontario. Child care should not be provided on the profit motive, and no public money should go into promoting the care of children through the profit-making system.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Callahan: I rise to thank the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) for the recognition that Peel region is one of the fastest growing regions in Ontario. As a result of inactivity in the past years, the school system worked around a lot of portables. The Minister of Education, with his gracious gift of some \$52 million through the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), will go some way towards alleviating those difficulties.

I hear shouting from the other side. All they ever did was shout. They should have been around when Brampton was growing. They would have realized things were changing.

I want to thank the Treasurer for the generous gift and I am sure there will be future rectifications of the inactivity of the past government.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Gordon: I want to speak on behalf of ordinary northerners, northerners who today are angered at this government's decision not to have

a debate tomorrow on the equalization of gas prices between north and south. The official opposition and the New Democrats have agreed to this debate, but this government, with one decision, has told northerners it does not care. It does not care about ordinary northerners, pensioners, small business people, people on fixed incomes or the workers.

Every time northerners pay more for gasoline, the government is taking food out of their mouths. The government is making it harder for them to survive. Northerners make less per capita than people in southern Ontario. Having gas prices that are higher in the north than in the south is just like an extra tax on people who live in the north.

I think this government is unfair. It is a government that does not realize that northerners are not prepared to put up with this kind of activity any longer. Two years ago, this government promised it was going to equalize gas prices between north and south. What has it done? Instead, it would not allow a debate on this issue tomorrow.

This government told all of these northerners who wrote to me, all of them who sent me petitions, all of the people who indicated they wanted their voice to be heard in this Legislature tomorrow morning: "No way. We are not going to listen to the people from the north." It is not fair.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: The Ontario Nurses' Association, which represents some 45,000 nurses in Ontario, met with the officials of the Ministry of Labour on April 10, 1987, to discuss the minister's proposed amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

I must say they have joined with the Provincial Auditor, the unions, the Ontario Law Reform Commission and the minister's own advisory council which, in fact, indicates that this act does not work.

Let me quote from the ONA letter to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye).

"We reject categorically the conclusions of the McKenzie-Laskin report and strongly question the premise upon which it appears to be based. We urge you, as minister, to address the failure of the 'internal responsibility system,' and to develop further amendments to the act which will promote effective improvements in health and safety in the work place.

"ONA proposes that more power be vested with the joint health and safety committee

allowing it the right to require monitoring in the work place, and the right to shut down unsafe operations."

This is just another group of the many which continue to say that the Minister of Labour does not know what he is doing. He has chosen to ignore his own advisory council which, on March 25, said: "The thing is in a mess. Let us have hearings." The minister is trying to kill those hearings.

1510

FARM CHEMICALS

Mr. McGuigan: On January 13, I asked the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) if he could set up a system of coding cartons of chemicals so that stolen chemicals could be traced. The Solicitor General set up a group called Agri Chem Security '87. The program involves a coding system, an educational program co-ordinated by the Ontario Provincial Police and an increased emphasis on warehouse security systems.

Agri Chem Security '87 chairman Jim Edwards chaired a meeting in Chatham, on April 22 attended by farm dealers, distributors and the Solicitor General. It appears that this proactive program of crime prevention has reversed the trend of farm chemical thefts.

Thefts in 1986 totalled \$116,000, a 300 per cent increase over 1985. Since the March 10 inauguration of the program, chemical thefts have been reduced to \$45,000 with an average of \$22,500 per theft. Ag dealers have upgraded their security facilities by installing alarms and other security systems.

Management is more aware of what has to be done to prevent thefts. Farmers have become more aware that they might purchase stolen chemicals. I would ask that all members from rural ridings alert their ag chemical dealers of the merits of this program.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Harris: I also want to talk today about an unprecedented action by the Liberal caucus. My colleague the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) had planned to debate the issue of northern Ontario gas prices during the time provided for private members tomorrow. The New Democratic Party was very receptive of that, thought it was an issue that should be debated tomorrow and one that deserved debate.

The Liberal caucus said no. This is the first time I can remember, since being House leader, that there has not been co-operation in what we will debate at private members' time.

One of the reasons it is important is that the only answer we have heard is from the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), that great spokesman for the north. He said: "No, we do not agree. Take that money we are ripping off from ourselves and put it into roads."

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Harris: It is a sad day when we have to pave our own roads in northern Ontario with the money that we rip ourselves off with in gas prices.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to inform members that the rules state that interjections are out of order.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

FOREST FIRES

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I would like to take this opportunity to update the members of the House about the serious forest fire situation we have throughout parts of northern Ontario and the effect this is having on our timber operations in the area.

At the moment, there are 45 fires burning in the province, 10 of which are causing us grave concern. Twenty-two of those fires started yesterday. The four largest are burning in the Fort Frances, Red Lake, Chapleau and Gogama areas.

As members may know, conditions in many forest areas are extremely hazardous. In fact, the forest fire hazard is high to extreme in most of the province, and there is little relief in sight for the next four to five days. The situation is so bad that we have instances where heavy machinery being driven over rocky areas is kicking up sparks and igniting small fires.

Because of this situation, the Ministry of Natural Resources has declared a restricted fire zone in parts of the northwestern region from May 1 to May 15 and in the ministry's north-central administrative region from May 7 to May 31.

A restricted fire zone means there is a ban on all open fires, except fires in containers such as barbecues, and the suspension of all burning permits.

As an added cautionary measure, modified work schedules for the forest industry have been implemented in both those regions. Forest operations are now starting earlier in the morning, when the hazard is lower, and concluding by noon each day. I might say that MNR staff in the

northern region have told forest industry representatives to prepare to implement modified work schedules on an ad hoc basis if the situation does not improve in the next couple of days.

As a result of this ban, several companies have announced temporary layoffs, effective today. Great Lakes Forest Products has laid off 500 workers, while Abitibi-Price has laid off 250 workers. I understand another company, Buchanan Forest Products, may shut down bush operations later this week if there is no rain.

In both regions, there are still more than 3,000 workers on the job in the bush. Timber harvesting operations have been restricted to lowland areas where, because of moisture, the risk of fire is lower.

I am proud to say we are receiving tremendous support from the forest industry, whose companies realize this is a situation where we have to give a little to save a lot. The companies have even set up their own patrols in areas where cutting operations are under way so that they can spot any new fire outbreaks. This co-operation helps minimize greatly the potential for more serious fires.

I will keep the House advised of this most serious forest fire situation.

RESPONSES

FOREST FIRES

Mr. Bernier: I am pleased to respond to the Minister of Natural Resources and I appreciate being brought up to date on the forest fire situation in northern Ontario, as do, I am sure, all other members of the House. Going home every weekend, I am very familiar with the situation, so I welcome the thrust the minister is putting into this new effort to control the forest fires. It is serious; there is no question about it.

I am pleased to see that the minister and the ministry are using the local people more than they have in the past. I think it is fair to say there was some reluctance in the past to use some of the pulp operators and the people who work in the forests, such as prospectors and others, in helping the ministry fight forest fires and do protective work. The minister's thrust in this direction must be applauded, and I would encourage him to encourage the use of those people, who know that area like the backs of their hands and can be very helpful to the ministry.

I want to remind the minister that this is not new to us in northern Ontario; we have been through this before. This type of statement and the advertising that will go right across the province spills over into the United States. May

16 is the start of the pickerel season in northwestern Ontario. It is the start of a new tourist season, one we are looking forward to with a great deal of anticipation, because we expect an increase of five per cent to seven per cent in the tourist business in northwestern Ontario.

I encourage the minister to request the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) to consider the possibility of an advertising program such as we had a few years ago directed towards the Minneapolis area or the Chicago area to remind the American tourists there that it is business as usual in northwestern Ontario, with tighter controls. They will not be able to have open fires, but they can come up and enjoy the excellent tourist facilities we have in northwestern Ontario. Then we can get the best of both worlds; we can get our forest fires under control and still have a good tourist season.

Mr. Harris: While we are talking about fire protection and the aircraft and what not in that report, I am a little surprised that the minister has not made any mention of the lack of aircraft for the spraying program.

For the second year in a row, the minister has completely—I am not sure of the right words; I guess “fouled up” would be the kindest words we can have—the whole spraying program, the tendering process, all the operators who are involved—

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: We sprayed more by mistake than you sprayed on purpose.

1520

Mr. Harris: —whether bird-dogging of the forest fires or in spraying programs, are upset. Now we hear they cannot get insurance; now we hear that the licensing procedures are being violated; now we hear that American airplanes are again being used. We brought this up last year, the tendering process and the irregularities that were going on there. We now see it is even worse this year.

We hear from operator after operator that the tendering practices have been violated. We hear from operator after operator that he was told he had to have a certain licence, and then, when a lower tender came in with a lesser licence, that aircraft was accepted, most of them from Quebec and from the United States. Now we hear that because they do not have the proper licence, they cannot get liability insurance.

I am shocked that we have not had a statement from the minister on the irregularities in that tendering process and what is happening with that program here in Ontario this year.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wildman: It is obvious from the comments of the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) that we can speak on anything that has anything to do with forestry in response to this statement.

I welcome the comments of the minister with regard to his efforts and the efforts of the ministry to minimize the forest fire danger in the northwest. As a result of the mild winter with low precipitation and the lack of precipitation this spring, we do have a very serious danger rating in the north, and we risk having a very serious situation this summer unless all of us, not just the ministry but all the users of the forest, are vigilant to ensure we do not cause fires that could otherwise be avoided.

Having said that, I hope the minister can explain further at some other time what efforts are being made to supplement the efforts of the fire centre in the Sault with regard to aircraft and whether or not he anticipates that we will be needing assistance from other jurisdictions this summer if the fire danger remains as serious as it is now and increases.

I note the efforts that are being made by the various companies mentioned by the minister, and I welcome them. I hope the minister will take as seriously the concerns for the workers in the bush as he has those for the trees and will respond to the very serious charges laid by the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot) earlier in this session with regard to Buchanan Forest Products and its operations; the fact it appears to have more vice-presidents than it has cutters and in fact is avoiding, or apparently avoiding, paying the proper assessment to the Workers' Compensation Board on behalf of its employees. If Buchanan can respond to this kind of danger, surely he can live up to his obligations to the Workers' Compensation Board if he is to continue to have cutting licences and permits in this province.

I hope the minister can explain to the House and to the people of this province what efforts he is going to make to ensure that there are enough aircraft available and that there will be enough forest firefighters available throughout the north this summer and what efforts he is making to ensure that all the users of the forest are co-operating so we avoid a very serious situation.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: My question is for the Premier. In light of the Premier's comments

yesterday and our desire to be able to get sufficient details to participate and assist in the constitutional accord, could he repeat or perhaps clarify for this House his reasons for refusing to allow a committee of this Legislature to have open public hearings for a short time on the impact of the new accord?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I thought we discussed this matter yesterday. It is the same question as the Leader of the Opposition asked yesterday, but I will be happy to discuss it.

As he knows, at the moment we do not have a draft of the final constitutional language. I cannot tell my honourable friend what the time frame will be between the receipt of that language as it is constructed after the drafting instructions were issued by the first ministers and the Prime Minister calling a formal meeting to discuss that situation.

At the moment, as I said, we do not have that wording. I would be very happy to share that wording as it becomes available from the federal government, presumably with agreement from the provinces that would be arbitrated and worked out over time. I would be happy to share that wording with the Leader of the Opposition. If he has any advice or concerns he wishes to raise, I will be very happy to discuss them with him.

As he knows, a number of constitutional experts will be looking at the matter, as they have already. There have been a variety of opinions on the matter already, and I would be very happy to have the member's advice on it. I point out to my honourable friend as well that I expect a very full debate in this House. He will have an opportunity to apply his highly trained legal mind to the subject, as will other members of the House.

Mr. Grossman: As the Premier may know, the Premier of Manitoba has confirmed that there will be public hearings in Manitoba prior to him agreeing on the final wording. As well, his friend and colleague Premier Bourassa indicated yesterday that he would agree to two weeks of public hearings before a specially struck committee of the Quebec National Assembly.

Given the Premier's oft-repeated assurance that everything is open for discussion and that he welcomes advice from all sides, why in this particular instance, which surely is as of major import as many of the other rather routine things that are sent out for public hearings here, would he refuse to do what his colleague the Premier of Quebec has undertaken to do, which is to allow the public to come in, look at the draft wording,

give some advice and share its thoughts on the agreement?

In view of the fact of public hearings in both Manitoba and Quebec, would the Premier reconsider his position and perhaps provide as open a forum here as the people of Quebec and Manitoba now have?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think the forum is completely open. After all, we are all elected to represent people across this province. We are happy to have those debates in this Legislature, all open and nothing to hide. Indeed, the Leader of the Opposition is entitled to express his opinion. Contrary to the view of some others, I think he is quite competent to express opinions on this particular matter.

With respect to the Manitoba situation, it has a unique agreement. I understand it is an agreement as opposed to a piece of legislation, relating back to some of the difficulties it had over the French-language programs in that province, to agree to that kind of thing.

I think each province is unique in that regard. I have said the time frame is something I do not know the details of at this moment. The Prime Minister perhaps knows; if he does, he has not shared it with me.

I think a full parliamentary debate in this House, as long as it takes, is going to be a very constructive way to put the input into the discussion.

Let me answer one other question. The member gave the impression in his remarks that someone would come in and give an idea to some committee to change the wording. Can he imagine the strange situation that would develop into? If some province has a hearing and somebody has an idea to change the wording, it comes back, brokered through the House presumably, and then goes to the other first ministers. We would be forever bringing Quebec into the Constitution.

As much as I am in favour of open hearings on these matters and letting everybody share what we have—and, as I said, I will give the member the information when we have it—I think our approach to bring Quebec into the Constitution is a very constructive one. I think it is better to move ahead than to delay for ever.

Mr. Grossman: With respect, the Premier is trying to suggest I said things that I did not say. I am just eager to have the opportunity for the public to come in and hear the deal, study the draft wording and comment upon it. He is the one designated to respond to that public input. He can choose to go to Ottawa after that and try to amend

the wording, or he can say he heard the input here and rejected it. We all respect his right to do that, and we do not challenge his right to do that.

All we suggest is that the people of Quebec will have a chance to comment themselves, be it immigration people, the day care coalition, the constitutional experts or, yes, the average person in Quebec. They will have the opportunity to come in and address their elected members before their Premier goes back to meet with his colleagues and the Prime Minister to finalize the draft wording and turn it into an accord which can then be taken back to the provinces. He continues to deny that opportunity to the people of Ontario.

1530

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary question?

Mr. Grossman: My final supplementary to the Premier is this. First, he has indicated there will be a full parliamentary debate. Could he therefore give us an undertaking this afternoon that at the very minimum there will be an extensive parliamentary debate of several days' duration before he returns to finalize and sign the accord in Ottawa? Second, will he give us in Ontario what the people of Quebec now have, which is an opportunity to allow the public to offer its comments and advice on this most crucial document?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I invite the public to give its comments and advice on this matter. They have been doing it the last few days. I have received calls, as I am sure the honourable member has, and I think that is quite legitimate. I am not insensitive to opinion on this matter, as I am sure he is not. He can come to the House, and the people who have any ideas can express them to him or to any other member.

I believe we should have a full discussion in this House. In my opinion, it is a historic discussion. I remember our past constitutional discussions. I think they were very significant in terms of the building of this country, so I think we should have a very full discussion in this House.

As the member knows, nothing will happen—Ontario cannot be in—unless there is a resolution of this House approving any constitutional amendment. Members will have the opportunity to accept it or reject it at that time. If the majority of the House rejects it, obviously nothing will happen. If they accept it, if the wording is worked out and shared all along the way, then I believe it will be a glorious day for Canada when Quebec joins the Constitution.

Mr. Grossman: We still have not received an assurance from the Premier that he will not go back to Ottawa to finalize that accord without first having had public hearings—

Mr. Speaker: Second question?

Mr. Grossman: —or even a direct assurance that there will be an extensive parliamentary debate.

Mr. Speaker: Is this your second question?

Mr. Grossman: I hope the Premier will offer that assurance quickly.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Second question?

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Grossman: My second question has to do with the situation which still remains unaddressed in the auto insurance industry. My question is to the Premier. It is now two weeks since the announcement was made with regard to the new system he and his minister appear to want to put in place. In these two weeks, has the Premier concluded with the minister just what level of profit the auto insurance companies will be permitted?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the honourable minister.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: In response to the honourable Leader of the Opposition, when this independent, permanent rate review board establishes itself, it will make all these determinations. This will be an independent board; it will be made up of a permanent chairman and part-time participants, and they will make all those determinations.

Mr. Grossman: The minister will recall that in the rent control legislation, it has historically been the fact that whichever government was in office set out the rent review guidelines, the profit margins, if any, and the formula to be applied by the rent control boards in reviewing allowable rent increases. He can hardly take the position that he has done anything for insurance companies if he and his colleagues, as a government, pretend there is going to be any kind of control put on it and then abandon to someone else a determination of what the acceptable level of profit might be.

Therefore, if in fact insurance companies are losing money on the auto insurance business they write, as he has said they are—

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: That is what the minister says; that is his evidence.

If the insurance companies are losing money on auto, as he says they are, and if he is going to prohibit them from increasing rates to break even, say, then how does he justify a circumstance where the insurance companies will be permitted to increase rates on theft, fire insurance, home owners' insurance and general liability insurance to make up what they allege they are losing on auto? What is he going to do about the increasing rates that result on that side?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: All those issues will be addressed by the committee, which will then come up with its determination.

Mr. Grossman: Do I understand from the minister that this rate review committee, which is reviewing auto insurance rates, is now going to determine what insurance companies should do for home owner insurance, fire insurance or theft insurance? That is the answer the minister just gave me. He said the committee will deal with that problem. This afternoon, two weeks after the announcement was made, with no bill introduced into this House—it was so urgent, but two weeks later there has been no bill introduced into this House—is the minister now making another announcement that his new board is going to deal with insurance rates and premiums for home owners, fire insurance and theft?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The independent review board will deal with insurance rates. This is something that has been advocated by the member's party. The member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) introduced a private member's bill. He has been calling for implementation of section 371 of the Insurance Act. We are doing all that. That committee will function in its proper role.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Rae: I am sure the Premier will be aware—at least I hope he will have been informed by now and is aware—that four charges of criminal negligence causing death have been laid against an individual worker who was apparently involved or working at Inco at the time of the most recent tragic accident.

My question to the Premier is this. Can he tell us why these charges were laid when the government is surely aware of the fact that the laying of those very serious charges against one worker effectively precludes any other form of independent inquiry or inquest into those same events? Would the Premier not agree that is

extremely unusual and indeed quite contrary to normal practice with respect to most situations where inquests are held and if there are any charges that flow from those inquests, they are then laid?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I just got a note with respect to that. I apologize to my honourable friend, but I am not familiar with all the details. The point he raises may be quite valid. I am sorry I cannot tell him any more than that, but the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) or the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) may be able to add a little more to this. I know the member is genuinely interested in an answer on this question. If he will give me the liberty, I can refer it to either of those gentlemen and they can tell him everything they know at the present time. If I could have the indulgence to so do, perhaps the Minister of Labour could help and then the Attorney General as well.

Mr. Speaker: Does the House wish that question to be referred to the Minister of Labour, because an answer was given?

Agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am not sure I will be able to be too much more forthcoming. I understand that at noon hour today four charges were laid. As the leader of the third party has pointed out, informations were laid by the police, who have been conducting an investigation into the Levack tragedy since just after the tragedy occurred. There have been a number of concurrent investigations, including an investigation which was ongoing by officials of the mining branch of the Ministry of Labour. However, the police, as is their discretionary right, have been conducting their independent investigation and the charges were laid around noon hour today, as the honourable member points out. Beyond that, since these charges have been laid, I think any further comment would probably be inappropriate.

Mr. Rae: I will have to go back to the Minister of Labour, since he has responded to the question. Does the minister not appreciate the impact of this kind of decision by the police? I gather from what he is saying it was a decision by the police alone, I presume after discussions with the crown attorneys and the local crown law officers in Sudbury; I do not know whether there were any discussions with people in Toronto.

Does the minister not appreciate, in the light of his responsibilities for occupational health and safety, the impact that this kind of charge against an individual worker has, not only on that worker

and his family but also on all those others involved who want some other answers, which answers cannot now be found precisely because a criminal charge has been laid prior to any other form of inquiry or investigation being completed?

1540

Can the minister explain how that has been allowed to happen, in the light of the fact that the Premier himself stated there would be a full inquiry and in the light of the fact that the minister himself told my colleague the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) that is precisely what would happen? That is now made impossible by the decision to lay the criminal charge against that one individual worker.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I readily acknowledge a number of the points the leader of the third party has made, including the fact that the inquest which had been scheduled to be held—indeed, a coroner was in place—will now not be held. I acknowledge that.

I can only say, and I am sure my honourable friend would agree, that the police have conducted an independent investigation on their own. I am not aware and have not had a chance to check, nor have my colleagues, to see whether there was any discussion with the crown law office or anyone else. I am simply advised that charges were laid today. I understand the point the honourable member makes, but I think the independence of the police to conduct this kind of an investigation is important.

Mr. Rae: It is not simply a question of the independence of the police. It is a question of what happens to working people when there is an accident and it is a question of what happens with respect to a full inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding that accident; that is what is at stake here.

I ask again, how is it possible, in an industrial accident of this importance and of this significance in terms of the Sudbury community and in terms of the mining industry, that a criminal charge was laid against an individual worker before any kind of inquest was held or before any kind of general analysis was made with respect to what took place and what did not take place? Can the minister explain that?

Can he confirm in this House that the effect of the criminal charge is that the activities of the company—the responsibilities, generally speaking, within the mining industry and practices throughout the industry—will now not be the subject of an investigation or of an inquiry and that those are effectively precluded by the laying

of a very serious criminal charge against one individual worker?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable gentleman would acknowledge and agree with me that at this stage—and he himself has acknowledged that very serious charges have been laid—the right of the individual involved to a fair trial and to the presumption of innocence and all of the safeguards that we have is paramount, and that anything further I can say would not be useful and might indeed jeopardize that individual's rights.

Mr. Martel: I want to ask a question of the Minister of Labour. The minister will recall that he, the Premier and my colleagues the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) and the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) were there, and we immediately heard how the worker might have been in a place that was improper. I turned to the minister and the Premier and I said, "Would you make sure that we know what the practices are"—not the policy—"not only in this mine but also in the rest of Inco's mines and province-wide, concerning workers working above men who are down below?" Here we have a charge that will now prevent that from coming to light.

I hate to say it, but I think there is a snow job here and the miner is getting shafted. I ask that something be done to produce any study that the minister has ordered, and I know he ordered one. I ask whether he is prepared to share with the House the results of that study now, because I want to know what Inco's practices are under those conditions.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I do not have the answer with me, but the honourable gentleman is correct. Indeed, in our discussions and my discussions with the three local members and the Premier on the day of the tragedy, we made a commitment to investigate the procedures immediately, not only at other Inco operations but indeed at all operations involving mines where there were loading pockets, whence came the rock in this particular tragedy. We have had inspectors out. I do not have a full and final report, but I can assure the honourable member that I will immediately compile all the data and I can share them with the House as early as tomorrow.

Mr. Laughren: The minister may recall that last August an Inco miner, Dick Kerr, was killed after he was sent into a very dangerous work place. No charges were laid at that time or have been yet. In my 15-plus years here, I have never been so disgusted with the system of so-called justice in this province. Would the Minister of

Labour encourage our call for a dropping of the criminal charges against this Inco worker?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I have indicated before that the police have conducted an independent investigation. I think at this time any activity by this government would not be useful and, indeed, in our criminal justice system I do not believe would be appropriate.

Mr. Martel: My colleague raised the question of Dick Kerr's death. I raise the question of Robin Comba, killed at Falconbridge when he was not provided with the proper mask. When he inhaled all the material, his lungs cooked. No charges have been laid yet.

Mr. Perron in Elliot Lake, who reported an accident, who reported that the gate was broken on four occasions, was ultimately killed. There were no repairs. Criminal charges were laid against the worker in that instance, because this ministry failed to investigate or to lay charges within the appropriate time.

What is going on when we have 200 cases in this province of people killed last year and the charges are against the workers? What the hell is going on?

Interjection.

Mr. Martel: Is there something wrong? Do not give me that sanctimony about the justice system. These are ordinary people getting killed. The Attorney General could not care less.

Mr. Speaker: Order, order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will attempt to ignore some of the comments about anyone on this side or, indeed, anyone in this Legislature not caring less.

If I can explain to the Legislature, the ministry has in place for fatalities a very thorough procedure by which not only are these matters investigated and recommendations made at the local level, but also in the case of fatalities and critical injuries, all recommendations, whether they are to prosecute or not to prosecute, are sent to the senior officials of the ministry, to the senior officials of the legal branch and, indeed, go as high as the deputy minister and the senior officials in the occupational health and safety division.

I can assure the House and I can assure the workers of Ontario, in spite of what is suggested over there, that these matters are taken with the utmost seriousness and that in all cases where charges ought to be laid, charges are laid.

ACID RAIN

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Minister of Energy regarding the Countdown Acid Rain

program. The minister will know that under regulations put in place by his government, Ontario Hydro facilities are allowed to exceed emission levels through the now-infamous banking provision.

In view of the wide public concern about this provision and in view of the fact that it is almost certainly weakening Canada's case before the United States in terms of reducing hydrocarbon emissions, will the minister, as minister responsible for reporting to this House on behalf of Ontario Hydro, admit that the inclusion of this provision was a mistake and will he recommend to cabinet that the regulation be struck down?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Of course, I am very much concerned about other jurisdictions and how they relate to our initiatives in Ontario regarding gas emissions. We have a record here that is very good. The banking part of the control of Ontario Hydro was one that was put in place to respond to breakdowns or situations beyond anyone's control.

1550

The fact that Ontario Hydro has cut emissions much more than any jurisdiction in the United States is an indication that we are taking that role very seriously. The fact that the banking provision is grossly misunderstood is causing it to be dealt with right now by the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) and myself. I cannot share too much about what is going on as it relates to our negotiations but, again, I think everyone in Ontario is going to be very pleased, particularly the people on the other benches, when we make a decision in the immediate future.

Mr. Gillies: I would take the minister somewhat more seriously if Hydro had moved at all on the questions of high-sulphur coal, substitution of low-sulphur fuels, scrubbers and improved coal washing. In view of the fact that all his colleague the Minister of the Environment can do is set acceptable levels and regulations, which are of very little use if the emissions are not being cut down at source—and that is Hydro's responsibility—what we want to know from the minister is, will he go to cabinet and tell cabinet that the banking provision was a mistake, that we have to get it out of there so that Hydro will meet the very standards which we believe the government wants it to meet through the emission standards?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: As I said before, I certainly am not in a position to be an apologist for Ontario Hydro because the records speak for themselves.

They have done more in Ontario to reduce emissions than anyone else on this continent; and we are going to do a great deal more.

To bring that other situation into focus, to even talk about bringing coal from Western Canada, the fact is that is grossly misunderstood. We are burning three million tonnes of western coal right now. We are treating the producing provinces in western Canada like a true part of Canada. We have negotiations and a rapport now that the previous government never had for four years. The Premier (Mr. Peterson) has made an agreement with the minister in Alberta. We are talking about doing mutual research on how we can burn more low-sulphur coal. Indeed, we have the whole situation well in hand, and members are going to be very pleased at the results.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Rae: In the light of the answers I have received from the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), I would like to address a question to the Attorney General. The Attorney General will know that he has a general power under the Criminal Code to stay proceedings. This is a general power that is given to the Attorney General, and his discretion can be exercised for a number of reasons.

I am not asking him to make a definitive statement today, but I am asking him if he would look at the entire file, at the entire nature of the industrial justice system and consider looking at all the circumstances in this particular case—in the light of the overwhelming need, which I hope he would recognize, for some kind of inquiry or inquest to be held that can look at the general circumstances rather than simply one individual charge—and consider staying the proceedings with respect to the charges of criminal negligence against Mr. Kuhle.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The honourable member is right; I have that power in this office. I would be prepared to do what the member suggests. I think it is the appropriate thing. I have one reservation at the moment: the note I have is that the investigation is not complete and that other charges may be laid.

What I would prefer to do, although I will be guided by the member's concern, is to consider that request when it is apparent that all charges have been laid or when the police investigation is completed. I anticipate that will be very shortly, and I will be glad to consider doing what the member has suggested.

Mr. Rae: I hope that is the course the Attorney General follows. I hope the Attorney General will understand that none of us on this side of the House wants to politicize the decisions that are made with respect to the administration of justice, but at some point some discretion has to be exercised to see that some broader interests are satisfied with respect to a complete investigation.

Since the Attorney General has told us that the police have said the investigation is still continuing—our information is that in fact may not be the case; this charge may be the only charge that the police intend laying—can he at least indicate to the House today that he will be making a statement as soon as possible, indicating when he thinks that investigation will be completed?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I should tell the honourable member that my note that the investigation is not complete is fragmentary and the honourable member may be right. I will look into that first. If the investigation is not completed and other charges are to be laid, I would like to defer consideration of the matter until such time as all charges have been laid.

If we are now at the stage where all charges have been laid that are proposed to be laid by the police out of this investigation, I am quite conscious of the member's concern and the concern his colleagues in the House have expressed. I will be delighted to examine the file carefully in the way he suggested to see what the appropriate course will be in the interest of the community and report to the House as quickly as possible on that matter.

ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD

Mr. Harris: I have a question to the Minister of Energy concerning Bill 142, the Ontario Energy Board Amendment Act. The minister has deep-sixed this bill for close to a year now, ever since our party indicated it would move an amendment to give the Ontario Energy Board the power to regulate Ontario Hydro's rates. Will the Minister of Energy not agree that "it is clear we must expand the mandate of the Ontario Energy Board to give the OEB the power to regulate Hydro rates"?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The reason the bill was set aside was just as the member has described it. The bill was brought forward for an entirely different purpose. The bill was brought forward to put a fence around the gas distribution people so they could not speculate with people's money in the distribution of gas and so there would be a picket fence built around it so we could control

that particular aspect of distributing natural gas brought in from western Canada.

Deregulation has been undertaken by the federal government and the producing provinces and this province responded to that immediately, more quickly than any other province, for distribution and all those other things. The purpose for which we put the bill was to address that problem, and if it was going to be used for something else I was prepared to hold it until such time as I could examine the other aspect the member was proposing.

Mr. Harris: It is very clear, then, that for some reason or other the minister does not agree and that is the reason he has been holding this bill for close to a year now. Does he agree the quote I gave him is his, September 1984?

I will give him another quote and ask him to comment, the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), September 1984: "The Ontario Energy Board has not been given the appropriate powers it requires." David Peterson, after the election of 1985, said he wanted "an approval system for setting Hydro rates because the recommendations are not binding and Hydro has ignored them in the past."

At a time when he is prepared to regulate the private sector totally in rents, doctors, pharmacists and insurance companies, why has he flip-flopped on this? Why do they refuse to regulate themselves; an obvious government monopoly, Ontario Hydro?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: There are other situations that are very important in this whole issue. I am sure the member is not aware of them and I should explain them at this time. There now is a question, and I think it is a very valid question, of whether, if the Ontario Energy Board participates in setting the rates for Ontario Hydro, Ontario Hydro's rates could be countervailable and we would have a very difficult situation in relation to the international market. It opens up implications we were not aware of before. As a good government we are going to make absolutely certain we protect the integrity of the system for the users in all of Ontario. It is a very important energy source. That is exactly the reason, and if they do not understand it, I will take a little time at their convenience to explain it to all of them.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Can the minister indicate to the House precisely what investigations his staff conducted on the matter of the Inco accidents? What number

of them have been completed to this time? Is he prepared to table the results of any of the investigations at this time? Finally, can the minister tell me why it is that when something occurred at 12 o'clock, with the number of staff he has in Sudbury, no one had even advised him as minister that the charges had been laid some three hours after it happened?

1600

Hon. Mr. Wrye: To answer the last question first: my staff, who came up here for briefing shortly after I ran into the honourable gentleman at the reception, had been advised shortly thereafter and were in a position to advise me well before question period. All details were not available. As the honourable gentleman notices, all of us are working to some degree on fragmentary information.

I can say to the honourable member that two investigators from the mining health and safety branch have conducted a thorough investigation and indeed, until today, the investigation into the accident at Levack had been continuing and had not been completed.

I can check in terms of the concerns I would have about reporting anything that might be prejudicial if charges are not stayed and see whether there is material we can share with him. If we can, we will. I give him that commitment.

I have as deep a concern about the tragedy at Levack as does the honourable gentleman. It is the kind of thing all of us hope will not happen any longer in Ontario. We thought we were beyond that in terms of bringing about safety in the mines of Ontario. Clearly, that is why we have had such a thorough investigation.

Mr. Laughren: Does the Minister of Labour not find it strange that it took only a couple of weeks for the police to lay charges against the worker in this case and that it takes months and months to lay charges whenever it happens against an employer? Why is the Minister of Labour, who is responsible for health and safety on the job, not standing in his place—instead of having the opposition, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) do it—calling for a stay of proceedings in this matter?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Very clearly, the Attorney General, who has some carriage in this matter given the nature of the charge, has made a commitment on his behalf and that of the government. I share the honourable gentleman's concern about the length of time it takes to lay charges. In the last year, we have tripled the size of the legal services branch. Certainly it is my view that where charges are laid—and as the

honourable member knows, over 750 were laid in the last year, double the previous year—they ought to be laid in a much more timely fashion than they have been in the past.

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: I have a question of the Minister of Revenue. I wonder whether the Minister of Revenue would indicate to the House how many employees of his ministry were brought into Metropolitan Toronto especially to carry out the market value assessment study of property taxes in the city, which we understand has recently been completed by his ministry.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I can get the specific numbers for the honourable member. There were some employees—and I have no idea what the number is—brought in from outside jurisdictions. They completed the impact study well in advance of their timetable. They have gone back to their ordinary duties. The statistics and the compilation have taken place and will be ready to hand to the Metro council soon.

Mr. McFadden: In order for this particular project to be carried out, I know the province had to cover the accommodation and other costs associated with bringing the officials into Toronto from other parts of the province. I understand space had to be rented in order to complete the study, and other costs were incurred. Would the minister be able to provide information to the House as to how much this particular study of market value assessment cost the taxpayers of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I suggest the honourable member could put the question on Orders and Notices since it requires a statistical answer. I believe assessors were brought into Mississauga; I believe they were brought into Sudbury. They were brought into a number of fairly large jurisdictions where the regular assessment staff was not large enough to give a rapid enough impact study for the benefit of the local municipalities.

PROVINCIAL PARKS

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Natural Resources. On Monday, when I asked the minister about the 51 new provincial parks the Premier (Mr. Peterson) had promised during the last election would be designated, the 51 parks we are still waiting for, the minister said that creating new parks “is not as easy as he”—meaning me—“chooses to make it.” In view of that, if creating more parks is more difficult than I choose to make it, can the minister

explain why, with regard to Holiday Beach Provincial Park on Lake Erie, getting rid of provincial parks is as easy as the minister has chosen to make it?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I do not know the details of that particular park. Of course, I will not attempt to answer the question until I get the information, which I am prepared to do.

Mr. Wildman: When the minister is trying to find out about this situation, can he find out how it was that this park was removed from the provincial park system without any public announcement, without a press release, without even notifying the Ministry of the Environment as is required by the exemption of the provincial parks under the Environmental Assessment Act; and apparently without even the minister knowing about it?

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I do not see anything humorous about the fact that the member of the area knows a good deal more about that park than I do. What is wrong with that? I am prepared to accept that at any time.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The fact of the matter, if I could have the attention of the honourable members over there, is that as long as we are talking about parks and a dedication to bringing parks into the system, the members are looking at the minister who agreed with the federal government to set aside one of the finest and largest tracts of land in the Bruce Peninsula for a new national park, one of the first in this province in many years.

UNDERGROUND EASEMENTS

Mr. Dean: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. I am sure the minister is aware that for some time now, the regional municipalities of Ontario have been seeking revisions to the Registry Act and to the Land Titles Act that would provide for the preservation of municipal underground easements that have either not been registered on title or are not able to be located but have been in continuous use. Will the minister give us his assurance that he will bring forward the necessary amendments this spring?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Unfortunately, I do not have control of the legislative agenda. The issue the honourable member raises is one we are working on, and we will bring it forward as soon

as we can, subject to the House leaders' decisions as to when that legislation can come forward.

Mr. Dean: I wish to remind the minister, although I presume he knows, that he has been aware of this situation for almost a year now. So far, he does not seem to have taken any action. In fact, he wrote a letter last summer to one of the interested municipalities, saying the proposed amendments are "a fair solution to this long-standing problem" and that he hoped to bring forward the requested amendments in last fall's session. The minister having failed to deliver in the fall, I would like to have something more than just a pious hope that they will take action this spring.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I repeat to the member that I have every desire to bring it forward. The member will know that this particular ministry has a lot of legislation on Orders and Notices, and it really is a matter of getting legislative time to do it. We will bring it forward as soon as we can.

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OVERCROWDING IN SCHOOLS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Education. He will recall that on April 15 more than 300 parents from Bishop Francis Marrocco Catholic Secondary School demonstrated in front of the Legislature in a candlelight vigil making, I think, the very unusual request to have a school building for the 400 students who will be enrolled in that school this September. We are now in May. There are not even portables. They are crowded into the second floor of an elementary school. This is our west end Toronto high school.

I want to ask the minister, since it is now May, four months away from the day after Labour Day, if he can give us an update on this situation—I know the minister is deeply involved—and if he can tell us what action he can take to make sure a high school is available for the day after Labour Day 1987.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to thank the honourable member for his question. I am aware of the situation, and I very much share the member's concern about the situation at Bishop Francis Marrocco Secondary School. I can tell the member it is one of those situations in this city that concerns me as Minister of Education.

We have said repeatedly that we are very anxious to encourage the construction of new school space where it is necessary to accomplish a successful extension of the separate school system through to the end of the secondary panel, but we also want to see the very best possible use

made of available space within the current school jurisdictions.

The member should know that the two school boards in question have been meeting through the joint committee process to see what they might arrive at. He should know as well that the Planning and Implementation Commission has been involved, and quite frankly, I am expecting a report from that commission very shortly, which recommendations I am quite anxious to receive and share with my honourable friend the member for Bellwoods.

Mr. McClellan: I am sure every member in the House agrees with me that the passage of Bill 30 by all three parties signalled a new day in which the Catholic community was no longer second-class in terms of the provision of school facilities and educational opportunities in this province. I think everybody agrees that was the significance of the bill we all unanimously supported.

I want to ask the minister if he can quite simply guarantee to the House and to the residents of west Toronto his own assurance that a solution will be found, either through the mediation process or through the negotiation process or out of the \$220 million allocated in the budget for capital expenditures this year, for the day after Labour Day 1987.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I will give the member the guarantee that I will do all within my power to ensure that those students at Bishop Marrocco are provided for in September 1987. I can say as well that I will obviously need the co-operation of the local Toronto school community to accomplish that. I am confident that duly elected trustees here in Toronto are going to recognize the situation to which the member has made reference, and I am very hopeful that, working together as a ministry and as a Toronto school community, we are going to be able to address in a satisfactory way the very serious and legitimate concern that once again my friend the member for Bellwoods has brought to my attention.

FACILITY FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. Hennessy: My question is to the Minister of Correctional Services. It is regarding the Kairos centre being used for young offenders. While the government is quick to talk about its open-door policy, its regional manager seems to be insensitive to the concerns of the citizens in the area. Will the minister admit to the people of Thunder Bay that young offenders have been housed at the facility while our community was negotiating with his ministry on whether or not

young offenders would be housed at the Kairos centre?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I appreciate the question from the member for Fort William. The Kairos facility in Thunder Bay is one that has had contracts with our ministry for 11 years now and was acting as an adult community resource centre. At the time it served as an adult centre, prior to the Young Offenders Act, it contained a number of people who were 16 and 17 years of age.

At the request of Kairos, it is being changed over. I signed a paper authorizing it last December, and at the end of April it was ceasing to function as an adult centre. Unfortunately, there has been some concern raised by the people. I am quite happy to review the matter very thoroughly with my ministry as well as with the regional officials to see if any of the problems connected with Kairos and the neighbourhood can be amicably resolved.

Mr. Hennessy: Will the minister play fair ball with the residents around the Kairos facility and consider leaving the centre as an adult centre and placing young offenders in a different location?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: We will certainly take that under consideration as we review the situation with them, because we do want the parents of the area and the neighbours to be good neighbours, as we have had great success across the province, in Toronto and other areas, in establishing such facilities. The goodwill of the public is most essential if these young offenders are to be returned to society in somewhat of a rehabilitated sense. I will gladly take it under advisement.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions. He will recall that on March 7 I challenged him to a public debate with me on Ontario's private auto insurance system versus the driver-owned public system in Manitoba. After telling the Toronto Sun he would be glad to accept my challenge and debate it with me, he subsequently refused that debate.

Given that he is going to be in Welland on May 26 and given that the Liberal association there wants to make it an insurance event, I reissue my challenge to debate the issue publicly with me there on a one-to-one basis. Will he accept?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: When the member for Welland-Thorold issued the challenge, I said I would do it. I did not subsequently back down; but what I felt was that if we are going to have a debate, let us have all the players debating. Let us have a representative of the Conservative Party

so we know where it stands. Let us have a representative of the insurance industry. Let us have some consumer representation. Let us have some representation from the bar association. Let us have a full debate.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps we could have one member speaking at a time.

Mr. Swart: It is not the insurance companies, the Progressive Conservatives, the consumers' association or the law society, but the minister and his government alone who are responsible for the insurance system in this province. He has the power to change it any way he wants at any time he wants. Given that I and my party are promoting the Manitoba public insurance system, what is preventing him from accepting the one-on-one debate between him and I on the two systems, except the weakness of his case and his cowardice in defending the Ontario system?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: We have a situation where we have two elected representatives in this House. That member can debate with me every single day in this House. He has an opportunity, as he has now, one hour every day from now until the end of this session. Any time he wants to debate with me, this is the forum and let us do it.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are other members who would like to ask questions.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Gordon: I would like to ask the Minister of Labour a question about what has transpired today in Sudbury. The Minister of Labour, along with the Premier (Mr. Peterson), was at the mine site on the day that accident took place. I am sure the minister remembers, as I and my colleagues from Sudbury do, the nature of the conversation that took place in that room, that a full investigation would be undertaken by his ministry and that he would look to an inquest, of course, for the results that would take place. Is he prepared today to tell this House that he thinks a police investigation and the laying of charges as such should take precedence over the regulations and the law by which his ministry works for workers in this province?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will refer that to the Attorney General.

1620

Hon. Mr. Scott: The question of whether a criminal charge should take precedence over another investigation is essentially the question that the honourable leader of the third party asked

me to consider in respect of a determination that a stay should be issued. I undertook to him to do so and I will do so.

Mr. Gordon: I think the Minister of Labour is dodging his primary responsibility, which is to stand up for the workers of this province. I do not see how the workers of this province could feel comfortable knowing that the Minister of Labour is not prepared to say that in industrial accidents those workers should be protected by full inquests in every respect. Is the minister prepared to do that?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I have answered the question. It is only appropriate to observe that the question the member has asked was the question about whether the criminal process should be deferred to another investigation. That is a legal question. It is not a question for any other minister; it is a question for the Attorney General alone, not for his cabinet colleagues.

I conclude the member was not present when the leader of the third party asked precisely that question. He asked if the Attorney General would consider exercising his stay powers. I responded as fully as I could at the present time by saying I would get the complete dossier and review it in order to determine whether that was the appropriate course and report to the House as soon as I could.

Mr. Martel: Could I ask the Attorney General a question about criminal charges? Can he tell me whether there is any instance of criminal charges of this nature involving industrial accidents being laid against employers? To his knowledge, have any been laid in the province?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I honestly do not know the answer to that question, although I will attempt to find out if the member wants that information. I think I can say that as a matter of practice, the view traditionally has been—and this view has been fortified fairly recently by a decision in the Supreme Court of Canada—that in a case where the evidence for a criminal charge is available, fairness dictates that the charge should be laid first and then proceed.

The member will perhaps be familiar with a murder charge recently completed in Ottawa which arose out of the murder of a young woman who was on the staff of a John Howard Society home. He will recall that in that case the criminal charge, which led to a conviction by the way, preceded the inquiry, the coroner's inquest, which is only now taking place. That would not always be the case but that is a relatively routine proceeding, the theory being that the coroner's inquest, because of the publicity that attaches to

it, may do some unfairness to the course of the criminal trial.

I do not believe there is any inflexible rule about what is appropriate. I am very sensitive to the observations the leader of the third party made about the proprieties. We all want, both in the criminal system and in the mining safety system, that not only should the just result be achieved but also it should appear to be an appropriate and plausible way of dealing with the matters. It is with that in mind that I think I owe an obligation to the House to look seriously at the question that was raised here and respond to it at the earliest possible time.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: It concerns an item in the order of business. I bring it up at this time and ask that you may reflect on it. There has been some indication that at private members' time tomorrow the Liberal caucus will not allow the resolution of member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) to go ahead and be debated if he is not here to move the resolution. We have been trying to get some interpretation on this. There is some opinion that it requires unanimous consent and, therefore, one of the members of the Liberal caucus could block the proceeding of this resolution tomorrow.

On the other hand, I have taken a thorough look at it, as has my colleague from the New Democratic Party, who would very much like to debate this as well. We can find nothing in the standing orders that would require unanimous consent for somebody other than the member for Burlington South to move his resolution. In view of the fact that this is coming up tomorrow, I wonder whether the Speaker could look into that and report back to us.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: The Liberal caucus has no objection to the resolution in the name of the member for Burlington South proceeding, in his absence or in his presence.

Mr. McClellan: It would be useful to have the matter clarified by you, Mr. Speaker. There seems to be some difference of opinion as to whether a private member's bill or motion requires the presence of the sponsor of the bill in whose name the bill is listed in Orders and Notices. From a reading of standing order 71, it does not appear that is a correct interpretation.

There does not seem to be a requirement in the standing order that the sponsor of the bill in whose name the bill is listed in the ballot item and

in Orders and Notices actually be present, and there is nothing to prevent another member from moving somebody else's private ballot item, in the absence of the sponsor. Since there has been some controversy about this, I think it would be appreciated by the opposition parties if the Speaker would study the matter, take advice and advise the House.

Mr. Speaker: I have listened very carefully to the three members who have spoken. If I might, I would like to inform the House that I did look into this matter approximately a year ago. I believe there was a private member's bill that came up and a member could not be here, and another member wanted to move that second reading.

On other occasions, some members have participated on behalf of other members' motions or bills, and it was done at that time by motion of the government House leader. So there are two precedents in this House. One is on motion of the government House leader; the other is by unanimous consent. I hope you understand that.

Mr. McClellan: Sure, but if one Liberal wants to block it, he can do it. That is exactly what you are saying, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: No, I am not saying that, and I am not here to argue. I am just here to say that the precedents of this House, as I have checked them in the past—and I would be glad to look at them further—I have learned that the precedent here is by unanimous consent or by motion of the government House leader.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In this specific case, may I just indicate that we have no objection to the resolution proceeding in the absence of the honourable member. He spoke to me about that earlier, and I might have misunderstood his intention, but we are prepared to debate that resolution. I think it would be preferable if we could undertake that business, and we are not prepared to block it.

PETITIONS

HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

Mr. Runciman: I have a petition signed by approximately 500 residents of my riding expressing concern regarding the conditions of Highway 2 between Gananoque and Long Beach and calling on the government to carry out repairs as expeditiously as possible.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I have a petition which reads as follows:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

This is signed by 133 persons, bringing the total to 1,203. I ask that the members stay tuned for more.

1630

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

WINE CONTENT AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 25, An Act to amend the Wine Content Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am pleased to introduce for first reading the Wine Content Amendment Act, 1987. The purpose of this act is to extend for a period of one year existing legislation which allows the limited use of non-Ontario grapes and wines in Ontario wine production. I am asking the members' support for this initiative, which has the full backing of both the Ontario Grape Growers' Marketing Board and the Wine Council of Ontario.

RESIDENTIAL RENT REGULATION AMENDMENT ACT

Ms. Bryden moved first reading of Bill 26, An Act to amend the Residential Rent Regulation Act, 1986.

Motion agreed to.

Ms. Bryden: The purpose of this bill is to amend the exemption provision in the Residential Rent Regulation Act, 1986, which discriminates against tenants in the 1,000-unit Main Square apartment building in my riding because they are not under provincial rent review. It is the same as the bill I introduced during the last session.

PUBLIC VEHICLES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 27, An Act to amend the Public Vehicles Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: This bill would prohibit passengers from occupying the part of a bus or streetcar to the immediate right of the driver's seat after the driver has asked them to clear that area. It is a health and safety matter of some concern.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 28, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to clarify that the Labour Relations Act applies to employees who are engaged in agricultural employment in an industrial or factory setting. Section 2 of the act currently states that the act does not apply to a person employed in agriculture. This provision has been interpreted broadly by the Ontario Labour Relations Board to exclude from the act persons whose employment relates to agriculture but who are employed by organizations that resemble industrial plants.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS
AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 29, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The proposed new section 29 increases the vacation period to which an employee is entitled under the act. Currently, the act provides for each employee a two-week vacation period that does not vary with the amount of employment service. Under this bill, the vacation periods would increase to three, four and five weeks, depending on the years of service.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 30, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to repeal a provision of the act that prohibits the inclusion of security guards in a bargaining unit. The repeal of this provision would permit security guards to join or to establish an association or union for collective bargaining purposes.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 31, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to prevent the hiring of strikebreakers and to control access to a work premise that is affected by a strike or lockout. The bill prohibits an employer from hiring or using the service of a person to do the work of an employee who is on strike or

locked out unless that person is specifically authorized to do so. Similarly, when a picket line is established at a place of access to a work premise, access is limited to persons authorized specifically by the bill. The bill repeals a provision of the act dealing with professional strikebreakers and strike-related misconduct.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS
AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 32, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to require an employer to provide a leave of absence to any employee who has been elected to provincial or municipal office so that the employee may be able to carry out the duties of an elected official.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS
AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 33, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to reduce the standard work week from 48 hours to 40 hours and to require employers to pay overtime for work done in excess of 40 hours per week in Ontario.

PUBLIC SERVANTS' POLITICAL
RIGHTS ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 35, An Act to provide Political Rights for Civil Servants.

Motion agreed to.

1640

Mr. Mackenzie: The bill is designed to give public servants the same political rights all other citizens in Ontario enjoy. It covers civil servants, crown employees, employees at community colleges, people working for agencies such as Ontario Hydro, the Workers' Compensation Board and the Ontario Northland Transportation Commission, but excludes deputy ministers, officers of similar status in crown agencies and other senior policy-making officials. It goes on to outline their right to speak, contribute to and work for a political party of their choice.

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 36, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: This bill adds three holidays to the definition of public holiday in Ontario. They are Easter Monday, the first Monday in August and Boxing Day, and bring us from just about last place in Canada to somewhere well up the list in terms of statutory holidays.

DISABLED PERSONS EMPLOYMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 37, An Act to provide for the Employment of Disabled Persons.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to provide employment opportunities for disabled persons. The bill requires that employers hire disabled persons to constitute at least three per cent of the employer's work force. The bill permits the minister to vary this percentage requirement in cases where the minister considers another quota to be more suitable. In addition, the minister may exempt an employer or class of employers from the operation of the statute. The bill establishes a register of employable disabled persons to be maintained by the ministry for the purpose of facilitating efforts by the employers to meet the quota establishment of the bill.

PENSION BENEFITS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 38, An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The new section prevents an employer from taking money out of a pension plan or discontinuing payments into the plan where there is a surplus of money in the fund.

We will have some more tomorrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is a pleasure to join in the debate of the throne speech. It has been eight years since I was elected.

Mr. Mancini: Too long, too long.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The people of Scarborough West will decide that, not the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini). I hope they do not believe it has been too long. I have no doubt that within the foreseeable future they will be given yet another chance to decide whether they like the kind of representation they have had.

It has been an interesting number of years. There have been times in this career so far when it has felt much longer than eight years and there have been times when it feels like it has slipped by with virtually no change. When one looks at this new throne speech, there is a sense of déjà vu, a sense of having been there before and that plus ça change is in effect again in this province.

I have tried in my career not to be restricted only to local concerns, not to be a parochial member of this House, but to use local issues to make larger political statements about problems that affect people across the province. Lately, as the members may know, I have also been involved in international affairs, trying to draw linkages and connections between our roles as legislators here, our roles in our ridings and the way we interconnect throughout the global village. It has often been a frustrating experience and had often been a very gratifying experience.

Members who have been here longer than I and those who have been here since I have been here will remember some of the issues that have come from my riding to this House. They have been matched, often paralleled by things that have happened in their own ridings. I think of the contracting out of nursing home workers and that whole problem that started in Kennedy Lodge, spread around the province and finally, we hope, has had an end put to it.

Listening to the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) introduce the kind of changes to the Employment Standards Act that we should have seen long before now by the present Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), I think of the antistrike-breaking legislation he was speaking about, which in my view should be entitled the Claude Dougdeen act. For those members who were not here, Mr. Dougdeen was killed, run over by a truck that was running through a picket line at Alcan Building Products Ltd. in my riding. He died because of the regressive labour legislation we have in this province.

My riding, an older part of Scarborough, suffered very largely by the recession that took place in recent years with the closing of plants, such as Canadian General Electric and SKF Canada Ltd., and with runaway plants like the

battery plant that went off for tax breaks elsewhere in Ontario. Those issues then found themselves on the floor, raised by me and raised by my colleagues as things such as that happened in their ridings.

One that the members may not remember came back to me today in terms of labour legislation. It is the fact that the whole question of the use of lie detector tests for employees started because of a woman in my riding who had to take one to work for a firm called Coinamatic Canada Ltd. This became an issue that, luckily, a year and a half or so afterwards, was actually resolved by the government of that time.

I like to think the kinds of issues I have been able to concentrate on speak to a coherence of policy and philosophy that is very much the hallmark of this party. When I think back to the two years since the accord was signed and since we set the agenda for the government of Ontario with that accord, there was coherence there. There was philosophy that was easily earmarked as giving power to the average working person, showing that a government can respond to their day-to-day concerns and can do it in ways that are very progressive and would open this place in a way that would make it more a people's place and less just a private men's club, as it has been for too long in my view.

I look back at the initiatives around ending extra billing, about equal pay for work of equal value, moving towards universal access to day care and getting away from welfare dependence on that, pension reform, all the component parts of the accord that were written by us, were negotiated by the mastermind the member for Bellwoods (Mr. McClellan), who now is standing to take a bow and whose exalted presence is recognized by all of us in the House. It reflected an attitude that is very much the essence of this party in that it tried to speak to concerns that affect ordinary people in this province in a way that would make them understand that their rights and privileges are as great as those with other power in the society.

1650

It is within that context that I want to attack the speech from the throne today as being the Liberals' attempt at establishing an agenda as they come to the end of our accord period. What a failure it is in terms of any coherence of thought. I think one of the largest failings in that throne speech is the absence of discussion of the rights of workers in the province, the rights of unionized workers in the province—now that the Minister of Labour is back in here—a real sense

that all of a sudden the kinds of things that we have put on the agenda in terms of first-contract legislation and other pieces of legislation are no longer priorities of this government.

It is somewhat ironic, when it was going to be my focus today, that I walked into the House to learn that a miner has been charged in Sudbury for the deaths that have taken place there. This cannot be seen in an absence of context, which is the history of many, many years when workers have been the ones who have been victimized at both ends of the accident, the person who dies in the accident and the person usually against whom a charge is laid in terms of the government response.

Time and time again the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) has raised the failure to prosecute; the incapacity of the swamp, as he calls the Ministry of Labour, to respond to the needs of those workers and to speak effectively on their behalf. Here we have a celebrated case that can only make you angrily cynical that the Minister of Labour and the Premier (Mr. Peterson), for the first time I have ever known them to do it, rushed off to the scene of an accident after first holding a briefing with the press to say that the Premier was rushing off to the scene of an accident in Sudbury. We would not want that to go unnoticed. There was great fanfare about their concern about it and about their involvement in it.

Today we hear from my colleagues in the Sudbury basin that there were discussions with the minister and the Premier about their concerns that there not just be a charge laid against an individual but also that this be dealt with in the context of how Inco operates and the practices in those mines. What do we hear today? We hear that the natural process of a further investigation, the natural process of an inquest being held, etc., is all interrupted because the police have laid a charge against one man.

There is not a heck of a lot that has changed from the old Tory Ontario to the new Liberal Ontario in that kind of attitude. When they are left to set their own agenda, rather than being under our watchful eye and directed by our priorities and the sense of social coherence in our philosophy, they end up, in the longest throne speech in our history, with an absence of any statement on the rights of workers or on the need to address any of the kinds of things that the member for Hamilton East has just enumerated in the list of 11 bills he introduced this afternoon.

Lately, I have thought about the role of our Premier in all this. On the weekend, I saw a

movie that I missed many years ago called *The Man Who Would Be King*. I do not know whether other members have seen it. It is a wonderful Rudyard Kipling story about these two adventurers from the British army who go off to conquer a nation so that they can become kings and rule it, and their final demise. It strikes me, listening to the recent discussion of the Premier's aspirations to become the first minister of the land—not satisfied with the mere, humble 10 million people in Ontario, he is somehow fit to lead the country—that this throne speech puts the lie to the long-term aspirations of the Premier.

The thematic emptiness of this throne speech reflects the Premier's attitude towards politics. The only major theme he has coming out of this long, long statement of fragments of ideas is that the government that governs best is the government that reaches out to the greatest number of people. That was the philosophy of Bill Davis, ex-Premier, during the high times of Tory economic boom before the bust, that you do what the government did in its throne speech: you take your new-found wealth, surprising wealth that has come into the Treasury in the last year, and you sprinkle it on to as many groups as possible to give yourself a little political bite with each of those groups around the province to gain votes in an upcoming election.

Mr. Offer: Like schools, like hospitals.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: The member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) is right, the largest single amount was for education. When one starts to listen to whatever the philosophy of the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is, especially when one sees its total lack of context with an employment program or dealing with the poor, which I will come to in a minute, the lack of connection and the lack of context that his education initiatives are put in, one realizes that this is probably a buyout of the public education system in terms of the potential political spinoff of Bill 30. One way of quietening down the possible ramifications that might happen out there because of the underfunding of the system and because of the initiatives of Bill 30 would be to spend a lot of money building some high schools in Ontario.

At the times of bust, this philosophy of reaching out essentially becomes reaching out to put the touch on people. That is the next thing that happens when one is in a downside, and that is what I would expect to see from a large Liberal majority.

Let us look at the lack of context again in terms of poverty, which I raised yesterday with the

Premier, who now may be called David "Antoinette" Peterson in terms of his notion that the poor in Ontario should eat Peterson cake until such time as the government has received the Thomson committee's report, has had time to digest it, has had time to bring forward new legislation to have the total overhaul of the system that we require, to have public debate of that legislation and then, presumably, have it passed in two years' or two and a half years' time.

Somehow, even though they had the longest speech in history, they do not have any mention in the whole length of the speech of any programs for the poor at all, and that they should wait for two years—

Ms. Gigantes: Another two years.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Another two years that they should go through the ignominy of accepting handouts and that we should continue to see front-page stories about the charity of individual Canadians and individual Ontarians who go out and fill food banks because Ontario will not put money into the hands of the poor so that they can go out and buy their own food. For two more years that is to be acceptable. Any government that wants to wait two years when people are in such dire straits is likely to wait an awful lot longer before it does anything significant. I now begin to wonder why the Social Assistance Review Committee was established. Is it only there to buy the government time?

Clearly, they have decided they can act earlier when they are pushed, even though they have commissions in other areas. I point to car insurance. A few months ago the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) was busy saying: "It is a wonderful industry. Everything is fine. The marketplace is dandy." Then the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart) undermined him and the industry totally, almost single-handedly. All of a sudden, even though there are three commissions out there—I cannot remember, at least two commissions into auto insurance going on—he made announcements and pronouncements a few weeks ago because there is a possibility of an election coming up.

If that is the case, why can they not make pronouncements while the Social Assistance Review Committee is looking at the overall scene? Surely it is preposterous.

1700

In case any members missed it yesterday, I want to read into the record what the situation is in Ontario. Over the last five years—members may recall that 1982 was a pretty bad year in the recession—we have had massive increases in the

number of people on social assistance, specifically employables on welfare, in Ontario. In Toronto, the figure has skyrocketed from 11,000 to almost 22,000 cases on welfare—a case reflects about 1.5 people—an enormous increase.

The Premier will turn around and say, as he had the gall to do yesterday, that this is because we are having an in-migration of people from Alberta and other places. I suppose one could make that argument around a place like Toronto, that Toronto would be seen as a place to come for work, although I often hear people on the other side talking about this as a place to come for easy welfare. Believe me, no one travels the country because he thinks it might be easier to get welfare as a nonresident in another province; nobody picks up and does that.

Even if we were making the argument that they are coming here for work, that kind of attitude, that kind of head-in-the-clouds notion, does not hold when you start to look at places like Sault Ste. Marie, where the increase has been 173 per cent. Who is going from Alberta to Sault Ste. Marie to look for work?

Is Brockville known as a place to which people migrate from all over Canada for work? It is not. Neither is Pembroke. Neither is Ottawa, which I think most people have always presumed to be sort of immune from the ravages of downturns in the economy because of the high civil service population there. It has some of the most startling figures in the province: an increase of 132 per cent over those five years.

We have to put this into context. This is an increase of people who want to work, who have fallen through the system, who are on welfare at the very time when we have the lowest unemployment we have had in Ontario for a long, long time. To try to push that away as if somehow it is a small matter, something that does not even deserve mention or warrant discussion in a throne speech, that in fact we would rather just say it is something we can wait two years to do anything about, is a colossally arrogant notion for a government to bring forward.

I say to any of the people out there who have been thinking about the good times that are here in Liberal times and the kind of progressive changes they have noticed around here and who want to give the Liberal Party credit for that, they should look at who has established the accord and they should look at this throne speech very carefully in terms of the potential damage of an arrogant government if this government were ever to be elected as a majority in this province,

because it dares to do this now while it is a minority.

I am surprised I did not hear from the Liberal government that this is something which was left it by the Conservatives in the past, something which, goodness knows, has nothing to do with its policy, and that it is doing everything it can to stop from happening.

Perhaps it was because I happened to raise the statistics for last March to this March, a full year into this Liberal government. I survey on a regular basis 14 communities and have done now for almost five years. In 10 out of 14 of those communities, year over year, there have been substantial increases.

In a place like Ottawa, we are actually looking at 1,000 cases more on welfare in March of this year than there were last year; and in the city of Toronto, an amazing 5,000 cases more. That is approximately 8,000 people who are now benefiting by the largess of our social assistance scheme, which the Premier does not think warrants a mention and does not need to be changed for a couple of years. People can continue to go to the Sally Ann, can continue to be thrown out of boarding homes without any protection and can continue to go down to FoodShare or whatever the local group is that is pulling together canned food for them. That is acceptable in Ontario at a time when we have a \$1-billion surplus.

Even given the sprinkle approach that they have taken to give little goodies to the various organizations in the province, why would they ignore this group entirely? I know I am not supposed to impute motives, but perhaps it is because the poor do not vote. Perhaps it is because they are not worried about a backlash from the poor. Perhaps they are presuming that the private charity of people out there who have been giving food to those food banks will not translate during an election into political anger that these people are being left behind while the rest of us profit so well.

I think it would be wise to remember just how much this government has helped so far. In a letter to my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner), the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney), the minister for earnestness, included the assertion that he has announced almost \$180 million in improvements in social assistance benefits over a two-year period since becoming minister. That may sound like it is an amazing response, but I remind members there is a \$1.5-billion cost involved here because of the numbers involved.

Does the government realize there are 500,000 people, men, women and children, who are beneficiaries of our social assistance system out there at the moment; a bigger population than most of the cities in this province. If one divides \$180 million by 500,000, one comes up with the big sum of a \$36 increase over two years. That is \$1.50 a month this Liberal government has given to the poorest people in our province since it has been in power, at a time when it has more money than any government ever had in Ontario. That is the sense of priorities and that is the social context in which this Liberal government operates.

I would really like to know why anybody should see this as a progressive government. Perhaps it is because the rates are so enormously high that we really do not need to bump them up very much. People go down to the food depots just to pick up white asparagus, perhaps fiddleheads and other luxury items to supplement their diets. That is all they really need. Perhaps people are doing so well on social assistance, as some people would have us believe, that they flock to Ontario to receive the amount of money they get.

Do the members realize that as a single person, employable, on welfare in Ontario, the maximum one can receive is \$458? Do the members know what the rents are in the city of Toronto, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, London or Windsor? That is basically saying that any single person who happens to be unemployed for a long time should not expect to be housed in an apartment. That is out of the question. The only kind of place that is affordable in any of our major urban areas is a room. We are already saying to these people: "That is what you must expect. That is what your expectations should be from this Liberal government for at least a couple of more years. We do not intend to do anything about it because there is a group that is looking at this overall issue."

If one is a single disabled person—the members will probably remember that I have raised this before—one can receive as much as \$300 a month less to live on in Ontario than a single senior can receive on the basic pension. The maximum one can receive as a disabled person is at least \$120 below the least amount we can give to a senior citizen in this province.

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As a critic in the old days, the present Minister of Labour used to say he would bring those people up to parity with senior citizens. When he was Leader of the Opposition, the Premier would stand in this House and say the Conservative

government was derelict in its duty by not raising those incomes to at least a parallel.

What did they do this January when the federal government finally offered a major increase guaranteeing around a \$238-increase in Canada pension benefits to disabled people? They took it back. They took almost all of it back from every one of them. They stole it right out of their pockets—this Liberal, progressive government that we have here in Ontario. I presume they had too much and that the Premier and the minister were wrong before, that they should not receive at least the same as senior citizens receive.

I remind them about the situation for families, for the kids who are poor in this province. In theory, we are a province that cares about kids, that has an emphasis on kids; yet there is not one mention of poor kids in the throne speech.

We have a system in Ontario which provides to a welfare mother or a family benefits mother—because it is slightly more, let us use the family benefits example—about \$125 a month on which to raise a 14-year-old child. Imagine \$125 a month to clothe and feed, to get all the kinds of attention one would want and one would hope for to allow that child to participate in society to the full.

If that woman cannot handle her budget of—say \$800 a month—cannot survive on that because she is paying \$600-plus for rent and just throws up her hands and says, "I cannot deal with this any more," we have a society known as the children's aid society which will come and take that child, relieve her of that child, and pay a foster parent \$450 to \$500 a month to look after that child. That is not because the child has extraordinary problems. If it does have behavioural problems, they get extra money to deal with that. That is the amount of money we say the middle class should be given to raise the poor people's kids.

"Let us not do anything about that now. Let us wait a couple of years. Let us not mention it in the throne speech. As good Liberals, when we are doing well in the polls, let us just throw out a few dollars here and there to voluntary groups around the province. Throw out a good argument about deinstitutionalization. Make it look as if we are doing more than we are. Shuffle the cards a bit. Have an election, get our majority and then we can settle down to being the Conservatives we actually are." That is what is going on. If they think we are going to let them get away with it, they are crazy.

I know when his chance comes, my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold will spend a

good deal of it talking about auto insurance and the sham of the way the government is approaching it, so I will not touch on it much today except to say that I have cases coming out of my riding—which he knows about, because he was at a meeting in my riding—which its review board, if it is ever constituted, would not be able to touch. It would still leave people hurt very badly, and the only solution is going to be driver-owned public auto insurance.

My colleague the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) has already raised with this government things that should have been mentioned around fair taxation and assistance to the working poor.

It is strange; we have this huge throne speech and there is not one mention about Ontario health insurance plan premiums. Do you remember that promise by any chance, Mr. Speaker—I know you have a good memory about this sort of thing—a promise in the last election that the Liberals, borrowing another New Democratic Party plank, were going to get rid of OHIP premiums? They have been in for two years; they have not reduced OHIP premiums at all, and there is no statement in this throne speech about what they are going to do about them.

We have working poor people, people on minimum wage in this province, who are paying income tax and who cannot afford it. We have seniors who have been relying on the money back from a property tax grant, which is now worth only about \$230 in 1981 dollars, which established the maximum; it was \$500 at that time. There is not one mention in this throne speech about what they are going to do about that.

If the government wishes to go to the people with those kinds of gaps and its little sprinkled icing approach to a throne speech, we would be delighted. We would be delighted to show up those problems.

I want to touch briefly on three other matters. One is the old question of deinstitutionalization.

The other day, with great fanfare, we had an announcement by the Minister of Community and Social Services that this year the government was going to release 130 mentally retarded residents of homes for special care in Ontario to community-living options and that the government was going to spend \$5 million on these 130 people to make sure they got the kind of access to the wealth of opportunities in our society that the rest of us have.

This was not only just a reannouncement of a promise made a year ago that within a year and a half the children in homes for special care would

be released, but it was also a slap in the face to anybody who believes in deinstitutionalization and the philosophy of deinstitutionalization.

Tomorrow morning, the government was to announce the context into which this was going to be placed and its long-term, seven-year plan to deinstitutionalize. That press conference has been cancelled, I am told. Maybe the ministries could not get their act together even yet.

Let me take us through a little bit of the reality of homes for special care, the reality of people in institutions at the moment and the total inadequacy of the kind of piecemeal approach to dealing with those people's lives that this government has taken.

To give members an idea of the numbers: in homes for special care, which are essentially mostly nursing homes, there are around 2,000 developmentally handicapped residents, people who basically were placed in those facilities because no other options were available to the family, because for a lot of them many years ago mental retardation was something we did not want to accept in our society and it was best pushed aside. But even after we got past that stigmatization, there was nothing in place in the society so kids kept being placed there.

About half of those people are over the age of 40 and have been there an awfully long time. Half are under 40 years of age. They are living in some of the most intolerable situations one could imagine.

When we start to talk about the selective deinstitutionalization of people because of their age—and I believe that is what the government is up to; it is going to say it is going to plan to get all the ones who are under 40 out of those institutions over the next seven years; it is going to start with the youngest; it is going to deal with the easiest to deinstitutionalize, those that have the least complications; it is going to play God with those people's lives in terms of which ones can maximize their potential and which ones cannot—then I say this government has a social policy which is inhuman and incoherent. We all have a right to maximize our potential. Any plan that is developed must have each one of those residents in mind.

I would like to raise an example, if I might, a place called the Muskoka Centre, which I encourage any members to go and visit some day. There are two wards there, one that I want to speak about in particular. It is a sub-basement. The windows are slightly above ground level and most of the body of the room is below ground level. There are between 20 and 25 residents in

that room, male adult residents, without a curtain between their beds, with a varying range of handicaps.

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There is a fellow in that ward whose name is Michael David Ward. He is 37 years of age and has been in institutions since he was a young child, first the Huronia Regional Centre and then homes for special care. He is profoundly retarded. He has what is known as an individualized program, which is supposedly geared to his needs. I will talk about that in a second. He sits on a mat all day long. He seldom, if ever, leaves this one room. According to his family, he has been outside on the grounds three times in the last year and a half. He got out of the room only a handful of times this winter.

His individualized program has included such things as toilet training, speech therapy and other basic things that look pretty good on paper. Following up on what kind of help he was actually getting, the family discovered that after a week of trying, they stopped toilet training; they said there was no point in it. It is taking us longer than a week to get our two-and-a-half-year-old toilet trained, let alone somebody who is 37 years of age and has been sitting on a mat in an institution all his life. That program was dropped, and he has not had his speech therapy.

I suggest that if we take the approach the government is taking on deinstitutionalization, David will be in this kind of home for the rest of his life. By the time the seven-year plan is in place, he will be more than 40 years old. He will be too old to be considered for bringing out into the community and trying to maximize his participation. It is never going to be the kind of participation that the members of this House or I have, and I would not want to kid about that. It will be very expensive care to have him in the community, but my goodness, he has as much right to that as anybody else who has been shunted aside in our society.

It is time we really started to look at these kinds of issues in those terms. This is a life sentence. I want to contrast the amount of money that is being spent on the 130 coming out, which is a realistic amount of money, about \$5 million, with the amount that is left for the 1,950 who are in there with the supposedly individualized programs. Those people are receiving, among them, \$9.5 million.

What we are basically saying is that we will bring out the easy ones; we will bring out the ones who have been politically difficult—the member for Bellwoods and I have been raising issues

about kids in those places since 1978—but the others can stay there sitting on their mats, lying in their cribs, and we are not going to deal with them.

That is the Liberal notion of deinstitutionalization: sprinkling money instead of having a coherent philosophy about maximizing everybody's potential. It was with some alarm that I read the comments of the member for York East (Ms. Hart) about how the government's policies in the speech from the throne were maximizing what people could do in this province. It is not real. I hope to continue to put the lie to that assertion, as Liberals make it around the province.

I want to deal a little bit with day care, just a little because there is going to be much more on this. They have come up with the most preposterous position on day care that one can imagine. The position in committee and the position by the minister today is that he is in favour of expansion in only the nonprofit sector, but for the first time ever he is going to give direct grants to commercial operators in day care so they can somehow increase the quality of care they have never given in the past.

This is a change of policy. I remind members that in December, and then again in February of this year in response to my leader, the Minister of Community and Social Services indicated he would not give direct grants to the nonprofit sector without giving them to the commercial sector immediately. Now he is saying he will delay the commercial sector until he is allowed to do that, but he will give direct grants to the nonprofits right away to hold people off. He said in those days, "It would seem to us as a government that it would not be equitable, fair or just to give the additional money and have parents in half the system benefit from it and the parents in the other half of the system not be able to benefit by it." Now he has changed his position.

Because I know of her interest in day care—I know of the work she did to help establish the day care centre here at Queen's Park, which a number of us worked on for many years unsuccessfully, so I am very appreciative of the work she did—I ask the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan) to join with Dianne Poole and Chaviva Hosek to meet the Minister of Community and Social Services—

Ms. Caplan: Good candidates.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Yes; they may not even stay as candidates if the government does not change its policy. Does it know the position of Dianne Poole and that of the Women's Perspec-

tive Advisory Committee, the Liberal women's think group? I will read out their names if the government wants me to embarrass it further about this strange policy it has developed, which people like her and Chaviva Hosek and other Liberals oppose. The government has to stop this.

Does the government not understand what is going to happen if it actually gives direct money to the for-profit sector? Does it not understand what road that leads it down? Does it not understand that it cannot be done equitably; that the argument of giving it to a range of operators, some of whom are unionized and have good staffing salaries and levels and others of whom have very lousy staffing salaries and levels, is ludicrous? The government cannot do that, and it cannot offer it out and then take it back in a few years.

The parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Community and Social Services, the member for Downsview (Mr. Cordiano), would not tell us how long it is for.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: He will figure it out.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: He said he will figure it out some time. The member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) asked him: "How on earth do you decide when to take this money back? Will it not raise the fees? Will it not lower the salaries when you take it back?" Now we have to ask the member for Oriole, if she is in support of this process of money to the commercials. I am shocked if that is the case. I would hope she would distance herself from this kind of foolish policy.

I have gone on much longer than I meant to, but there are two other matters I want to raise because they are both very important to me. One of them is the issue of disarmament.

Clearly, I was as excited as anybody in this House last November when my resolution to make Ontario a nuclear weapons free zone was passed 61-9. I was pleased with the comments of the Premier saying he would have supported it if it had been the thing to do to be in the House. I was not even overly shocked by the fact that he said he was not sure exactly how to do it. But over the next number of months, when I started to ask him, "What action are you going to take; are you going to make this government policy, a statement that the government is going in that direction?" he would not move.

When he said I should come up with ideas for him, I did. I brought in two pieces of legislation, both totally within our jurisdiction, to deal with the whole question of putting teeth into the

resolution to make Ontario a nuclear weapons free zone. Still he did not move; in fact, he laughed at it, when we were here in the Premier's estimates last year. All of a sudden, I realized he did not believe in a nuclear weapons free zone at all. He was not looking for a way to make this a reality in Ontario. It is not mentioned in the throne speech, in all the list of things he has even an intent to look into.

In his own home town, just a couple of weeks ago, General Motors announced it has taken on a contract to provide the carrier, the chassis, for the new Midgetman missile. Not only are we therefore going to be indirectly involved by having a corporation involved in something that is designed directly to go along with a nuclear warhead—it is not a flatbed we are talking about here; we are talking about a specific chassis designed only for this specific missile—but also the Premier does not dissociate himself from what is happening in his own backyard and say, "I had better do something soon to make sure this does not proliferate, because we have all agreed we do not want to have complicity here." He does not do that. He does not say we are going to withdraw ourselves from Varity Corp., which is making part of the missile in England and which we own shares in.

Why should anybody in this province now believe that the Premier really meant that he wanted Ontario to be a nuclear weapons free zone and that we should go around the rest of the world, as that resolution states, talking about why it is important to have nuclear weapons free zones, when in fact what we have seen is that he does not really believe in it at all? He only did it because he did not want to offend people, and when it comes to action, he is unwilling to act. The Premier should not think that is going unnoticed.

1730

The final matter I want to raise is my international connection with Nicaragua to say formally, if I might, because this is the first time I have had a chance to do it, that it was an honour to travel with my colleagues. Six of us went to Nicaragua and we were treated magnificently. I think we all came back feeling quite humbled by the warmth of the generosity and hospitality we were given. We have come back, I hope, to provide members, in another week or two, with a request as a government and a Legislature for assistance.

As a new democracy, they are struggling to deal with political pluralism in a time of war, something we have not handled too well our-

selves in past times. They have had no tradition of democracy. They have had either an American dictator—for instance, back in the 1850s—or their own local dictator supported by the marines or the guard trained by the marines. There has been no expression of the will of the people until this revolution. They are very new at democracy. Believe me, because of that novelty, there are things we can learn from them.

We are so caught up now in the long-time traditions of our democracy and the representational aspects of it that we have professionals ourselves who become politicians. Politics is important to people only every four years or whenever we have elections and then only for a 37-day campaign in which people are bombarded with information. They try to choose which of us will hurt them least and dissociate themselves from politics in their daily lives.

In Nicaragua, they have an earthy, day-to-day connection between politics and life, from which we could learn a lot in terms of a need to get a much more direct connection with the people and the power to those people to effect change.

One example I would leave with you is that the minister of health there told us she can have every child in Nicaragua vaccinated within a 48-hour period. That is how they wiped out polio. It is because they have young people in that society who go into the barrios; people come into their homes to be vaccinated. They do not have the incredible infrastructure we have now where only doctors can do certain things and only registered nurses can do things and the people are disconnected from health decisions.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Dr. Stephenson is giving you the evil eye.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am being given the evil eye. I am not saying professionalism is bad.

Miss Stephenson: I am not giving you the evil eye. I am just being disturbed by the misinformation.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Scarborough West has the floor.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am sure the member and I will have a long discussion about this later over a cup of tea or something. She will educate me as I should be educated.

I would just say there is much we can learn from a new democracy, but there is much help that they need from us. There are basic things. It is having typewriters available to the opposition parties; it is a matter of having copiers they can use. They really want to be able to send some people here to learn English and to watch our

committee system work to see how they can make their committee system work in Nicaragua. I see shudders by some members. Even though it is flawed—and coming to the Legislature is certainly not the way to learn English—I would hope that when we bring forward those recommendations from the national assembly, they will be looked at with an open and, I hope, an encouraging eye.

I cannot leave the discussion of Nicaragua without talking a little about freedom of speech. There is an awful lot of misinformation about that country here, which is really shameful and sorry. As a country at war, it is true that they have shut down one newspaper. It happens to be the case, however, that the existing newspapers on a regular basis have to carry the positions of the opposition parties, without any censorship or editing. You will get these very long diatribes. Try to imagine it. It would be like the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) having unfettered access to the Scarborough Mirror once a month.

Mr. Warner: Better still, the Liberal Party newspaper, the Toronto Star.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It is an incredibly dangerous kind of thing to do. But even within the war situation they are in, there is that kind of freedom of speech.

I will remind members that there is no capital punishment in Nicaragua. There is a total amnesty for all the Contra rebels who give up their weapons. They do not even require a visa for Americans to come into the country—that is why there are so many CIA there—and there is an openness within the society. I can only say to the members that if they go, they will see it, and I wish more of them had been able to come.

There was with us on our trip a representative of the Toronto Sun. Members may recall that while we were there, there was the death of a mercenary, a Canadian, who had gone down with the Contras and was going to file stories to the Sun upon his return. He was killed in an action against the government. The Toronto Sun person who was with us tried to assist her local paper in the filing of stories from the other side's point of view, if you will, while she was there. I think she did so as best she could, given that the body of this individual was in the hands of the Contras and the government did not know whom it had killed anyhow. That week some 200 people had already died, and why should they have noticed?

She then came back to the Toronto Sun, in this land of freedom we have here, and entered five

stories and a lot of pictures about what I think was a fairly important event. It certainly was seen as an important event in Nicaraguan life that we were there, as politicians, to see what was going on and to come back and talk about it. She had, of course, been paid to come along with us, take those pictures, presumably write a story and file.

I have learned today that those stories will never see the light of day; the *Toronto Sun*, in our democracy, in our bastion of free speech, has decided the readers of the *Toronto Sun* do not want to know and need not know what is going on. I also understand that because all her information is the property of the *Toronto Sun*, nobody else can get access to it either.

I just ask the members to think, if they will, the next time they read a story about the suppression of the press in Nicaragua and the role of censorship, about the kind of distorted view of the world the *Toronto Sun* is now pushing in Ontario, because it wants to publish the diaries of this mercenary and not give the other side at all.

I am not suggesting at all that Miss Comeau, who is the journalist involved, is a Sandanista partisan or is an advocate, as I am, of the system in Nicaragua. She is a very good, objective journalist. But the very notion that this paper in our country will be giving us only the view of this mercenary, who went down to be what I consider part of a terrorist group of thugs, and will not allow its own reporter even to have her story show up in the paper, even if it wants to disclaim any connection with her point of view, is in my view an affront to democracy.

I did not want to sit down today without letting the members know that we are continuing to get biased reporting in Ontario; we are still getting the CIA-distorted view of what is happening in Nicaragua. I hope, on the next trip we take, that more of the members will be able to come and that when members of their assembly, from all parties, come up here to learn English, our members will understand there is real opposition in that country and see that they have an ability to express themselves and that we can learn from that and, I hope, understand that we have—it may have seemed subtle because maybe nobody was ever going to know about this—the same kind of and worse censorship under the guise of democracy in Canada than they do in Nicaragua.

1740

Mr. Henderson: I rise to add my own words of appreciation and my comments to this excellent throne speech that sets forth in such an outstanding way the progressive agenda we propose to follow in Ontario.

On behalf of the ethnic, especially the Ukrainian ethnic communities of Etobicoke, and indeed on behalf of all my constituents, I want to underline certain of His Honour's remarks in this throne speech. The ethnic communities of Etobicoke, especially the Ukrainian-Canadian community of and near St. Demetrius parish in central Etobicoke, and I on their behalf, have a special reason to applaud His Honour's words.

To quote His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, "We will invite proposals to establish nursing homes specifically tailored to meet the needs of Ontario's diverse ethnic communities." Wise words indeed. His Honour goes on to say, "We will strive to ensure that seniors receiving institutional care are able to enjoy the same level of dignity as those living independently in the community." Amen to that as well. These are words that my ethnic constituents, the St. Demetrius community especially, have very good reason to applaud loudly, for they have long been striving to establish a multi-ethnic nursing home in Etobicoke for the people of Etobicoke-Humber and for our ethnic citizens.

Several years ago, Father John Tataryn and his associates Sister Rachel and Messrs. Dave Carswell, John Seychuk and Ted Woloshyn assembled, with the many excellent people of the St. Demetrius community, a request for a licence for a nursing home in the St. Demetrius residential and cultural complex. This proposal was developed and refined with the assistance of architects, planners, consultants and many long hours of planning, meeting and lobbying within and by the Ukrainian and other Etobicoke ethnic communities to bring a first-rate nursing home complex to St. Demetrius and to Etobicoke.

To those members who may be unfamiliar with St. Demetrius, I will simply say that it has a residential facility that combines sensitivity and warmth with state-of-the-art planning to provide a standard of care that truly allows its residents to enjoy a very high level of dignity indeed. However, a residential care setting is not enough. Nursing home care is required as well and St. Demetrius has amply proved its standards are second to none in the designing and operation of such facilities.

I should add that I know St. Demetrius to be first and foremost a place of worship of unparalleled magnificence and spiritual inspiration. The St. Demetrius school gives the young boys and girls of this community an outstanding educational experience in a cultural context that is rich and honourable indeed. The cultural life of the Ukrainian community of Etobicoke enriches

and inspires all Etobians, ethnic or not, Ukrainian or not, and indeed is a focus of pride for all Ontario.

Who in this assembly has not been thrilled by the performances of Ukrainian-Canadian dance troupes such as the Yavir Dance Ensemble? It would surprise no one who is familiar with the excellence of the St. Demetrius community to know that many of the outstanding performers of Yavir grew up under the nurturing and the guiding hand of Father John and Sister Rachel and the fine leaders of their community.

The Yavir Dance Ensemble performed in Exhibition Park only weeks ago and I had the pleasure, along with other legislators from all three levels of government, of enjoying a truly inspiring performance. Yavir is off to the Maritimes, then to Europe and the Ukraine, where its world-class performance will show the Soviet Ukraine that Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian excellence, to which this Etobicoke Ukrainian community contributes so significantly, are alive and thriving in Etobicoke-Humber. I have seen Ukrainian dancing performed in the Soviet Union and by dance troupes from the Soviet Union in Canada, and Yavir is second to none in my estimation.

Nursing homes with an ethnic base make very good sense for scientific, as well as for cultural reasons. As a physician, I can describe a very strong medical argument in favour of the establishment of nursing homes tailored to the needs of ethnic communities and ethnic Ontarians. A very large percentage of the residents of a nursing home have mild to moderate, sometimes even rather severe, memory changes, commonly associated with senior years or with the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease. With these changes comes a lessened capacity or perhaps a lessened wish to form new relationships, adjust to new surroundings and understand the ways and styles of communication of new people. Men and women with memory problems typically revert to their mother tongues acquired in childhood. They often lose a second language and a second cultural familiarity acquired in adult years. It is for those very reasons that we say again and again that Ontario's seniors must be cared for in their homes, in their neighbourhoods and in their communities where families and friends and surroundings are familiar and friendly, and not only in our institutions. If they ever do require institutional care, then the institution must be tailored to meet those same requirements of compassion and humanity.

As ethnic seniors reach a time of life when nursing home care becomes a necessity, for all those reasons it becomes more necessary than at any other time in their lives that they be cared for in a setting where their cultural heritage is respected and preserved. It becomes imperative as well that the care providers be fluent in a language and in a cultural idiom that those seniors so fundamentally require.

For all these reasons, I applaud very warmly indeed the initiative in this throne speech that specifies we will establish nursing homes specifically tailored to meet the needs of Ontario's diverse ethnic communities. These will be facilities where seniors receiving institutional care will be able to enjoy the same level of dignity as those living independently in their communities.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) and I will shortly visit the St. Demetrius community. I will urge the minister as vigorously as I am able to, to consider the ethnic Canadian communities of Etobicoke, and especially St. Demetrius, as ideal settings for such a venture. The St. Demetrius proposal is excellent. It is multi-ethnic in focus. It has received input from state-of-the-art planners and consultants. It has been amply reviewed on many occasions by ministry personnel. Above all, I believe it is backed by a dedicated, responsive community with a proved record of community service and a proved record of planning and implementation excellence.

It is underwritten by people in a community who show that they do what they promise they will do and do it well. To paraphrase a well-known aphorism, they do it right, they do it well, they give it class and above all they do it with warmth, compassion and humanity.

There are two or three principles of good government that I hold to be very precious and that I believe are ably reflected in this throne speech. We strive for the greatest good for the greatest number and the principle, of course, of utilitarianism. It seems to me that nursing homes geared to our ethnic population will serve a badly neglected and important sector of our population. In my opinion, this proposal accords well with the utilitarian principle of the greatest good for the greatest number.

The second of those principles is that we care for those who are underprivileged or otherwise disadvantaged in society. Indeed, ethnic Ontarians have far too often fallen into that category, and it is high time we redressed that deficit. I can think of no more deserving group than the

Ukrainian Canadian community, as I have come to know it, in Etobicoke.

A third principle, I believe, is that of greater freedom in our political institutions. I believe ethnic Ontarians deserve that kind of freedom to grow and to develop their potential. I believe that to facilitate their doing so will be to the ultimate benefit of all Ontarians, ethnic or otherwise, Ukrainian or otherwise; all Ontarians. It is not just an act of altruism to serve our seniors and our ethnic communities and to serve them well, but it is also an act of selfishness because all of us benefit when those groups are encouraged and facilitated in their efforts to contribute, to be creative and to take their full part in the cultural and other life of our province. Our ethnic seniors deserve the freedom to be creative and to contribute as they so richly can to our cultural life in Ontario.

1750

My congratulations to the ethnic communities of Etobicoke and the Ukrainian-Canadians of St. Demetrius, and my urgings to my colleague the Minister of Health to consider very carefully indeed the St. Demetrius proposal for a nursing home licence as he moves to fulfil this promise in the speech from the throne for nursing homes in Ontario tailored to the needs of our ethnic communities.

Mr. Baetz: When I noted that I was being preceded here by the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston), I knew I was in trouble, because when that honourable gentleman gets on his feet it appears time has no limit.

Mr. Swart: Nor his ideas.

Mr. Baetz: That is a matter of choice and taste perhaps; whether they are good ideas.

With the short time that I have available before we adjourn, I simply want to outline what I plan to talk about in my reply to the speech from the throne. I intend to restrict my replies to that part of the speech from the throne that dealt with child care and the approach the speech from the throne has taken to this subject of child care.

I will certainly be taking serious issue with the idea, as expressed in the speech from the throne, that child care is important to us for the economic realization, for the economic wellbeing of families. It sees child care as an economic issue. I will take serious objection to that because it seems to me that the question of child care today goes far beyond the economic issues. Child care today is the major social issue of our country and of our province. For the speech from the throne, which is presumed to be able to set forth the

philosophy and the policy of a government, to simply confine it and relate the child care question to the economics is, of course, a bifurcated, myopic and tunnel-visioned approach to this very important subject.

As I say, child care is the social issue of the day. It illustrates in a very classic manner how social changes sometimes take place so rapidly that public policies and programs simply lag behind. We must deal with this issue, but in a far broader and more comprehensive way than the speech from the throne has suggested.

I shall be taking issue with the rather narrow approach to child care. The speech from the throne talks about child care as being simply a public service. That is what it calls it. It talks about introducing it as a public service, presumably something comparable to our educational system. That, of course, is only one aspect of child care. The care that we may be providing for children outside the parental home is only one part of the thing.

The speech from the throne does not address the question of parental responsibility at all. Surely as we move forward here in policies and programs of child care, we must address that fundamental question of where parental responsibility comes into this. Certainly, we in our party have a very clear answer to that question. I want to talk about that as well.

When we speak of the range of choices in child care, the speech from the throne seems to think that the choices are only between a profit and a nonprofit licensed day care centre out of the home. It does not talk about measures that might have to be taken, major measures that have to be given to help parents who choose to look after their children in their own home. Of course, that will mean increased subsidies to those parents through child tax credits and so on. I will be talking about that subject as well because as Dostoevski said, "Income is coined freedom."

If we want to give the parents of very young children the real choice of whether they will look after their children in their home or in fact will purchase this service outside of the home, if we are to give them some choice, then we are going to have to provide them with some assistance to make that choice realistic and feasible.

That will need to include more financial assistance directly to the families. It will include addressing the subject of extended parental leave from the place of employment and so on. We will be taking a good look at that part of the speech from the throne on that particular dimension of the question.

We will also be looking at—and it was also addressed in that lengthy statement by the member for Scarborough West—this whole question of whether we should continue to encourage the commercial, private sector operators in the child care field.

Certainly, the speech from the throne gives a very confused and mixed message to the commercial day care operators who have been working in the child care field and who now actually carry on about half of the licensed day care operations in this field. The question is what the approach of the government should be on that one and whether it should provide help.

As I say, the speech from the throne is very confused. At least the New Democrats are consistent in their approach. They have said in our select committee on health that the profit motive, which is to them the dirtiest six-letter word in the English language, has no place whatever in the child care field and, in fact, the commercial operators should be encouraged to get out of the field as soon as possible. I can understand that. I do not agree with that principle, and we will be saying why we do not find that acceptable.

The point is that the speech from the throne, instead of providing enlightenment in this area, creates only confusion and it will contribute to a demoralized commercial sector of the child care

field. In essence, the approach that we will be taking here is that this speech from the throne really has added nothing but confusion to the child care field.

We who have been in this House for quite a long time understand, of course, that any speech from the throne is rather replete with bafflegabbery. There is always some of that and I suppose there is always more of it on the eve of an election. But this speech, particularly as it addresses the child care issue, has more than its share, and I think it is most unfortunate in that it has created a great deal of confusion.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to correct the record, if I might. I made a mistake in my desire to make the Liberals seem even more miserly than they are actually. I did the fantastic thing of dropping a zero. Essentially, the increase in welfare rates to beneficiaries around the province works out to \$15 a month, or 50 cents a day, that has been given per person. Unfortunately, I made it seem as if it was worse than that, if you can imagine that.

On motion by Mr. Baetz, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Thursday, May 7, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, May 7, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS ONTARIO ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACT

Mrs. Grier moved second reading of Bill 9, An Act respecting Environmental Rights in Ontario.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for her presentation and she may reserve any portion of it for the windup.

Mrs. Grier: It is with some pride that I move second reading of this bill and join this debate. I would like to thank the many individuals and environmental groups that have indicated support for the principles of this bill. I do not imagine there will be any objections. I cannot see how there possibly could be, but just on the off-chance that there are I will reserve some time at the end to rebut any arguments.

This is not the first time that bills giving environmental rights have been debated in this House, but I think this debate is occurring at a time when public concern about the environment has never been higher. With that increased public concern and heightened public awareness has come an increasing desire on the part of the public to be part of the process. As citizens become worried about what is happening to their environment, they find that they have very little access to the system and that they have no environmental rights. They find frustration at every turn when they seek to play their part.

They have an increasing desire to play that part and to do their bit to keep their environment clean. The question I am most frequently asked by people is: "What can I do? What can individuals do?" There is a willingness to assume responsibility to keep the environment clean and this bill allows people to do that and to play their own part.

I have called this an environmental bill of rights. In 1980, my colleague the member for Beaches-Woodbine (Ms. Bryden) introduced an environmental Magna Carta. The purpose is very similar and is very clearly spelled out in section 2 of the bill:

"2(1) The people of Ontario have a right to clean air, pure water and the preservation of the natural scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment.

"(2) Ontario's public lands, waters and natural resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come, and, as trustee of those lands, waters and resources, the government of Ontario shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of present and future generations.

"(3) It is hereby declared that it is in the public interest to provide every person with an adequate remedy to protect and conserve the environment and the public trust therein from contamination and degradation."

Simply put, this bill establishes the right to a clean environment and makes citizens participants in maintaining that environment and gives them the tools to do the job. It gives citizens the right to go to court to protect the environment where damage is being done. It allows citizens to ensure that decisions are not made or approvals granted without notifying the community and without people having the right to a public hearing. It guarantees people access to information relating to environmental issues, such as the toxicity of chemicals. It sets up funding for interveners where there is a hearing before an administrative tribunal. Finally, it protects workers who report acts of pollution from reprisals from their employers.

I think it is important also to say what it does not do. It does not take away from the minister any of his responsibilities to maintain the environment. In fact, it supplements the role of the minister and the role of the government. Our legislation in this province gives the government the power to act to protect the environment but it does not give it the duty to do so. This bill ensures that if the government fails to act, citizens can.

Unfortunately for all of us, pollution control in Ontario is a history of regulations written and violated and of compliance deadlines extended and postponed. It is a history of negotiated deals from which the public has been excluded, but it is the public that has been put at risk. In any risk analysis, we seem to have three sides. We have those who create the risk, those who regulate the

risk and those who experience the risk. In our system, the risk makers and the regulators have had all the power and the risk takers have had none. This bill attempts to redress that balance.

I am not sure whether members of the government party are going to support this bill. Their comments in the press have indicated they perhaps feel much that this bill does has already been accomplished. I hope that is not going to be their position today because it would be unfortunate if the government reacted defensively to what I am suggesting. There is no doubt that this government has been more open than its predecessors with respect to allowing access to the decision-making process. It has provided ad hoc funding for intervenor groups. We have had improved fines and penalties legislation. We have had Countdown Acid Rain and the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement. But none of these moves has put citizens on the level playing field. This heightened public awareness can be expressed not only by pressure on the government to do things for them. The public is not only saying, "Do it for us." It also is saying, "Let us play our part." That is what this bill does.

The environmental problems that we face today are so numerous and so complex that I hope the government will be willing to have this army of citizens anxious to play their part, citizens who are ready and willing to monitor the environment, inspect the environment and report on violations of environmental legislation. I hope the government will support arming those citizens to do the job because it is no good admitting citizens to the process if they do not have the price of admission. If they are not armed with the tools to do the job themselves, their participation has to be less than complete.

1010

If you have to go cap in hand for intervenor funding or to argue for months that you are entitled to intervenor funding, as did the citizens of Haldimand when they were fighting Consumers' Gas and its liquefied natural gas project; if you have to prove before the courts your right to standing as are the citizens of the city of Toronto and the Canadian Environmental Law Association in the case against Toronto Refiners and Smelters; if you have to worry that you may lose your job because you have reported that your employer has been violating the environmental legislation; if you have to do these things, then you are not able to play your role. It is like sitting at the bargaining table without having the right to strike.

This bill gives citizens the right to go to court and this gives citizens some clout. If this statement gives rise to the fear that somehow the bill opens the door to a whole series of lawsuits and a great deal of frivolous action or delaying tactics, let me reassure the members. Section 5 of this bill clearly states that it is possible to have security posted for costs if a citizen takes an action.

In addition, there are the very natural safety valves that are provided by the onerous task of even going to court. Going to court is always an act of last resort. The costs of doing so, the time involved in doing so and the effort of doing so are indeed daunting.

Other jurisdictions have legislation similar to this. In Michigan, a bill was introduced and passed in 1971, and in Minnesota in 1973. In neither of those situations has there been an avalanche of court cases that has clogged up the already busy courts. In fact, when legislation was introduced in Quebec in 1978 to allow class actions, there were so few cases that the government had to set up a fund to encourage people to take advantage of the legislation.

This government likes to boast of its leadership on environmental issues. Support for this bill gives it an opportunity to demonstrate that leadership. If this bill is supported today and goes to committee, we will have an opportunity for public hearings. The public can come before a committee of this Legislature and say quite clearly what its concerns are about the environment and what it thinks we in this House ought to be doing about it.

By supporting this bill, we have an opportunity to open up the decision-making process and to allow the public access to the judicial system as well as access to the regulation-making process.

A government that is truly anxious to achieve a clean environment must surely welcome this initiative. After all, if the job our government is doing is as great as it likes us to believe, then it has absolutely nothing to fear. If it and the citizens can work together, it is ensuring that we not only have the right to clean air and water but in fact possess clean air and clean water to bequeath to further generations. That is what this bill will help us to do and that is why I hope today it will have support from all sides of this House.

The Deputy Speaker: The member is reserving nine minutes and 40 seconds for her wrapup.

Mr. Knight: At the outset, I want to mention to the House that I certainly support an environmental bill of rights in principle. I believe that the citizens of Ontario should be able to enjoy and

protect a clean environment. Indeed, they should have the right to a clean environment for themselves and for future generations so that we can have future generations.

I notice, however, that Bill 9, which was originally proposed by the member for Huron-Bruce (Mr. Elston) and now is being introduced by the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) has been overtaken by events since its first introduction in 1979 by the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Smith. I notice that the member for Beaches-Woodbine is here today. I understand she spoke in support of the bill at that time. I am sure she will take an interest in the proceedings this morning.

Some aspects of the bill that is being introduced today have been acted upon since the Liberal government assumed power in June 1985, and one was even acted upon by the previous government.

I wish to take a few minutes to review some of these points.

Bill 9 contains measures authorizing public interest funding. Under Bill 9, public interest funding would be provided from an environmental hearing assistance fund to participants appearing "before any board, tribunal, commission or court, or any appeal or review thereof."

The throne speech of April 1986 committed the government to ensuring that groups and individuals seeking to intervene in the public interest before administrative tribunals would be assisted. In conformity with this, the Ministry of the Environment has continued to make funds available on a case by case basis for interveners and proceedings that take place pursuant to Ministry of the Environment legislation.

The minister has expanded the funding for public groups wishing to participate in environmental hearings. Groups appearing before the Tricil Sarnia landfill, the 3M London energy-from-waste facility, the Consumers' Gas liquid natural gas storage proposal in Cobourg, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Highway 416 project in Ottawa, and one that is of special interest to me, the Halton regional landfill, were provided with intervener funding. Funding will be provided to groups wishing to appear at the Ontario Waste Management Corp.'s West Lincoln landfill hearings.

This policy of funding citizens' participation in environmental hearings results in better, more democratic decision-making and will be actively continued. The government is committed to a progressive approach to intervener funding that would apply to other ministries and their

agencies, boards and commissions as well as the Ministry of the Environment hearings.

However, intervener funding raises a question as to who should pay, the proponent or the government. I believe the principle that those who profit from an undertaking should pay for all of its associated costs means the proponent should be responsible for the funding. This government supports the fundamental concept of public interest funding and will continue providing funds on a case by case basis until the legislative proposal being developed by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) is approved by the Legislative Assembly.

The Liberal government is firmly committed to full, public participation in environmental matters. Here are some examples.

In July 1985, it was announced that the Ontario Waste Management Corp. would be subject to the full requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act. It was exempted by the previous government by order in council. In July 1985, the ministry announced the creation of a spills regulation advisory panel to conduct a public review of the spills bill regulations that were proclaimed on November 29, 1985.

In September 1985, it was announced that mobile polychlorinated biphenyl destruction facilities would be subject to full hearings under the Environmental Protection Act. In January 1987, the ministry released a report on public responses to the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement, MISA, white paper tabled in the Legislature in June 1986 and the ministry's responses to the public comments. More than 100 public interest groups, municipalities, industries, industrial associations and individuals participated in the 70-day public review period.

The recycling advisory committee was created in December 1985 to advise the minister on the new program to promote the establishment of the multimaterial source separation program on material use.

Returning for a minute to the funding issue, the ministry is increasing the amount of funding it gives to environmental interest groups. In the 1986-87 fiscal year, \$631,914 was given as 34 grants paid to 30 environmental interest groups. This is up from 20 grants amounting to \$406,000 that was paid to 17 environmental groups in 1985-86. The funding given to environmental groups in the 1984-85 fiscal year was \$255,000 to 11 groups.

The environmental bill of rights also increases public access to environmental information. Public access under Bill 9 would be available to

government information concerning emissions, most government licences, permits, approvals and orders, including applications therefor, and to any government reports on inspections and analyses. The minister could refuse access where it would hinder law enforcement, reveal personal information or disclose trade secrets. Such a refusal would be subject to appeal to an environmental assessment board, with a subsequent appeal to the Divisional Court on a point of law or jurisdiction.

1020

Bill 34, An Act to provide for Freedom of Information and Protection of Individual Privacy, was introduced in the Legislature by this government and obtained first reading on July 12, 1985. It has since obtained second reading and has been referred to a committee. The environmental bill of rights devotes one section to access to environmental information. Bill 34, in 60-odd sections, presents a comprehensive, up-to-date view of the public's right to government information of all sorts, balanced with numerous provisions to protect the privacy of individuals.

In addition to the provision of access to environmental information, environmental concerns are singled out for special treatment in section 11, which obliges a minister to make public, as soon as practical, information revealing a grave environmental health or safety hazard to the public. Provision is made for the appointment of an information and privacy commissioner to whom appeals will be made. The decision of the commissioner is final.

The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has shown his support for Bill 34 and since becoming minister has ensured that the Ministry of the Environment practises open government. All reports are promptly released, including several that for one reason or another had been gathering dust on some bookshelf in the ministry. The minister believes strongly in freedom of information and that an informed public is a strong advocate for environmental protection. His consistent policy has been to provide freedom of information at the Environment ministry and he has delivered on that policy.

Bill 9 would also make it an offence for an employer to dismiss or otherwise harass an employee for reporting environmental contamination. The 1983 amendments to the Environmental Protection Act introduced by the then Minister of the Environment, the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt), gave an employee who is dismissed or otherwise harassed the right to a

remedy before the Ontario Labour Relations Board. It is also implicit in the 1983 amendments that it is an offence to intimidate an employee. Therefore, this section of Bill 9 is already in place.

At the outset, I indicated my support for an environmental bill of rights in principle. I have indicated a couple of the things that have been ongoing since this government has taken office to implement some of the concerns addressed in this bill, and some had already been introduced. Although the bill of the member for Lakeshore contains some things that have already come to pass, it is start. The province should have a right to a clean environment, and I will be voting for the bill and would like to see it referred to committee.

Mr. Gillies: I do not want to sound as if I am repeating everything that has been said, but as Environment critic for our party, I am very pleased to indicate that we will be supporting Bill 172—

Mr. Laughren: Could you repeat that?

Mr. Gillies: My friend the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) is having trouble hearing. Perhaps the speaker system could be adjusted to meet his requirements.

Mr. Laughren: No; comprehending, not hearing.

Mr. Reyecraft: He has trouble believing. He can hear but cannot believe.

Mr. Laughren: Who said, "Once a Tory always a Tory"? It is not true.

Mr. Gillies: Mr. Speaker, I am being harassed from the left flank.

The Deputy Speaker: The member for Nickel Belt will please constrain himself.

Mr. Gillies: You know how easily I am distracted, Mr. Speaker.

I want to congratulate the member for Lakeshore for bringing this bill forward. The history of the bill has been discussed already, and I will touch on that, but I particularly value this opportunity, my first as Environment critic for the official opposition, to speak for a few moments this morning about some of these issues here in the Legislature.

Through the first couple of questions I have asked during question period and through the position we are taking this morning, I hope to be sending out a very important signal. The signal I wish to send out is that there is a very strong concern within our caucus and within our party on questions relating to the environment, that it is my intention to be perhaps even more aggressive

and diligent in the pursuit of these issues and that we believe it a basic Conservative principle that we would wish to join with people of goodwill of whatever political stripe in the conservation of a clean and healthy ecology within our province. We see that as part of our mission as a party, and I intend to be pursuing these issues very aggressively.

I would say also, just by the by, that in the first few days of assuming this responsibility I have had the opportunity of having a number of discussions with the minister. I believe we share a number of concerns and will be able to co-operate in a number of measures. I have also thus far enjoyed a very good relationship with my counterpart in the New Democratic Party, somebody of whom I would say—at the risk of having this quoted back in an election brochure—I have an extremely high regard and whom I believe I would be able to work with on a co-operative basis on a number of issues.

I guess what I am saying is this. This bill would have passed anyway with the support of the two opposition parties, but I am very pleased to hear that the Liberal Party will also be supporting the legislation and that it will pass unanimously. That having been said and with my assumption or understanding that this bill will pass this morning, perhaps we should look beyond that as to what will happen next.

We have had several private members' bills come out of this chamber in recent months that have gone either to the committee stage or even to third reading and have demonstrated the power of private members' hour to influence the course of legislation and the course of policymaking in this province. I urge the government and government caucus members here present to support the immediate referral of this bill to a committee—the select committee on the environment might be as good a forum as any, I suggest—and during the long tenure of this Legislature we could even see it called for third reading and passed into law.

Mr. Philip: Liberals do not call opposition bills for third reading; they have shown that.

Mr. Gillies: I am hearing misgivings expressed in this regard by my friend the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip). It is very easy for all of us to stand on a Thursday morning with all the pious hopes we have for a clean environment and for the rights of citizens with regard to their environment; it is all very well for us to mouth these truths if the next step is not taken and we do not see the legislative changes made that we would wish. I leave that as the responsibility of

the government to call the bill as soon as possible.

As has been mentioned already, this bill is back in a third incarnation, having first been introduced in 1979 by the then Leader of the Opposition, Dr. Smith, as Bill 185. The bill came in again when the opposition critic of the day, the member for Huron-Bruce, now the Minister of Health, brought it back in. I want to quote because I think the Minister of Health cited the case as well as anyone. In speaking to his own bill on June 1, 1982, and I quote from Hansard, he said:

“Citizen groups in Ontario spend as much time and money fighting the Ministry of the Environment as they do fighting polluters.... These obstacles to fighting a court battle against a polluter, coupled with the recognition of the legal fees involved and the fear of having court costs awarded against the plaintiff if the case is lost, are enough to cause even the most ardent environmentalist to back off.”

Clearly, one of the most important features of the bill before us is this right, the right of people to access public hearings on major projects and to receive intervener funding to assist with that venture. I want to make a point on this, and I hope the Minister of the Environment will either hear or see these remarks.

Under the minister's regime, there has been an ad hoc application of intervener funding, but I do not consider that to be sufficient. It came as a surprise to me on assuming my critic's responsibilities to find that there is no policy per se, at least none that I could detect, on the question of intervener funding. It has been the right, the prerogative and the judgement of the minister to determine what group will receive intervening funding with regard to what project. That is not sufficient. It leaves too much discretion in the hands of the minister to determine who is worthy of this funding and who is not. It leaves room for a minister, not necessarily this one, to fund those groups with whom the minister of the day agrees but to prevent intervener funding from flowing to those who are in opposition to the minister's point of view. We need a policy that guarantees free and equal access to this for all of our citizens who wish to make points on environmental projects. That is a very salient and a very appropriate feature of the bill of the member for Lakeshore.

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Frankly, several features of this bill are implicit in legislation anyway, but I believe the bill of rights is a good step because for the first

time it will assure the right, not the privilege or the hope, but the right of our citizens to a clean environment. It will assure them of the right to make their point of view known to the courts, to the ministry or to society if they feel that right is being trampled upon.

As a member who has worked extensively in the labour area of late, I am intrigued by the proposal that there will be some protection against reprisal for workers if they see fit to report to the appropriate officials should there be a pollution situation going on through their employer, perhaps covertly or otherwise. I read that section very carefully and I believe it is an appropriate feature of the bill. We are not talking about an employee having the right to shut down a business, even on a temporary basis, because of some problem he or she has detected. That is not what I read here; what we are seeing is simply the right of workers to be protected against reprisal should he or she report it to the appropriate officials. That should be the right of any citizen within our society, whether an employee or not.

Access to information is an important feature of the bill. Based on my first couple of weeks' work in this area, I fear we may be seeing more verbiage and rhetoric from the minister on the question of openness and flow of information than we are seeing in fact. I may bring to the attention of the House in coming days a situation that has been brought to my attention where a serious pollution problem occurred in one of our constituencies and was not reported by the ministry to appropriate officials; in fact, the particular problem I am being briefed on was not made public. I will not bore members with the details now, except to say we are not getting a full public airing of all the environmental problems and environmental challenges we face as I believe we should.

I am very pleased that we will be supporting this bill. I am pleased that the member saw fit to bring it forward. Again, I urge the government members to take the next very important step and see it referred to committee and for third reading and passage by this House.

Mr. Charlton: I too rise to support Bill 9 from my colleague the member for Lakeshore. It is a bill which I think goes in a direction that this Legislature has not chosen to follow on any issue that relates to people, human health and the environment. It is a bill which addresses a problem that exists across a whole range of areas we have discussed on a rather lengthy and frequent basis in this House.

I start out by saying that we appreciate the support of the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) and presumably his colleagues; and that of the member for Halton-Burlington (Mr. Knight) and presumably his colleagues as well. Having said that, I listened carefully to the member for Halton-Burlington and his comments on the bill, and in spite of his support he does not appear to fully understand the importance of what this bill is about or the importance of the kinds of problems, as I said across a whole range of areas not just the environment, that have to be addressed in terms of rights for people.

The member for Halton-Burlington mentioned that the government had significantly expanded the expenditure on intervenor funding. As the member of Brantford said, there appears to be no clear policy on intervenor funding. I think that is a fair comment. Even if there were a clear policy, policies are things that can be changed from year to year or withdrawn without reference to this Legislature in the future. The right to intervenor funding is what we have to address here in this debate today; not whether intervenor funding exists or whether dollars have been expanded over the last two years from \$200,000 to \$700,000, or whatever the numbers were, but whether the availability of that funding may disappear after an election when the government gets a majority or with a change of party in power. What we have to address here is whether the people of this province have the right to intervenor funding, a right that has to be enshrined in legislation.

The member also made reference to the fact that we have a piece of freedom of information legislation in the works. That is fine. We hope it will pass, but again that is not the point. The point is that freedom of information legislation will be incomplete because it is universal and general and there are some areas where there are greater requirements for withholding information than there are in others. It is our contention that in the case of the environment, in the case of occupational health and safety and in the case of a number of other areas like that where human life is at risk, we have to have maximized access to information. That may not be true in terms of Treasury documents about future tax increases, but it has to be true in cases where human life and human health are involved. Whether or not that freedom of information legislation passes, we need the toughest standard when it relates to the environment.

There is another aspect of the question of freedom of information, or access to informa-

tion, which is irrelevant to whether or not there is good, tough general legislation in place. One of the biggest failings in terms of this Legislature and the laws we turn out is that because freedom of information is in one act and this is in another act, and a right is over here, it becomes very unclear to the general public how those pieces of legislation fit together. Perhaps the government members can tell us in their next round of comments, if they are committed to freedom of information, what is wrong with saying that in a number of pieces of legislation, so that when it comes to environmental rights or occupational health and safety, it is clear that freedom of information applies.

What has to be said here today is that above all the questions that have been discussed by the member for Halton-Burlington and the number of issues that are addressed in this bill, such as freedom of information, intervenor funding and access to hearings, the most important aspect of this legislation is the right of individual people and groups of people to have a mechanism to protect themselves and their environment above all else, to seek redress when the Ministry of the Environment does not act or in their view acts inappropriately. That is the most important aspect of this bill.

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We have seen and we credit the present minister and his ministry with having taken actions against some polluters against whom the previous government failed to act. We have also seen many cases that we have raised in this House where there continues to be inaction. In some cases, that inaction drags on for a year or two years; in some cases, it drags on for 10 and 15 years. The people of this province have to have the right to find redress when their government fails them.

One of the other things that is going on in the area of the environment when it comes to setting standards, emission limits, exposure limits or any number of other aspects of the environmental discussions we have had, both around the environment and around occupational health and safety, is that we have scientists, bureaucrats and politicians setting those standards and, in so doing, assessing what they like to call "acceptable risk." No matter what one defines as "acceptable risk," the fact that the word "risk" is involved in that definition means that there is some level of risk involved in the standard that has been set. The standard has not eliminated risk.

Citizens have the right to know what is going on in that process, what the politicians, the bureaucrats and the scientists are deciding is an acceptable risk, a risk that they, as citizens, are going to be exposed to. They have to have the right to challenge that acceptable risk if they feel that the acceptable level of risk which has been chosen by the politicians or the bureaucrats is not an acceptable level for them, because they happen to live downwind from the plant in question or because their exposure over a shorter period may not be as much of a problem as it is going to be for their children.

With all the unknowns we know exist in environmental decisions, most of the environmental decisions we make relate to the short term and not to the long term. The citizens of Ontario in a democratic society, in what we all like to call a free society, have to have the right to challenge and to fight for themselves, their families, their neighbours and their friends when they feel the government has made a bad decision, when they feel the information has changed the circumstance and the government is not acting to make that change or when they feel the government has failed to proceed in prosecutions.

We need these rights, and I urge all members to support this bill.

Mr. South: It is an honour for me to rise today to support, in principle, Bill 9, an environment bill of rights first introduced by the Liberals in 1979. This is beginning to sound like, "Always a bridesmaid, never a bride."

The underlying principles of the bill are ones that must be supported by anyone who cares about the environment we live in and the legacy that we will leave to our children. However, the bill, in its present form, like any bill at this stage, can be improved. Parts of the bill would require co-ordinated action by several ministries for two reasons. First, because the bill applies to public lands, water and natural resources and to forms of use apart from pollution which are regulated by other ministries; second, because the rights and procedures set out in the bill apply to statutes such as the Conservation Authorities Act, the Planning Act and the Drainage Act, administered by other ministries, as well as to statutes administered by the Ministry of the Environment.

In addition, there are several matters which may be more effectively addressed in statutes of general application because the issues raised are of importance not only in the environmental context but also in the context of civil liberties, consumer protection and human rights. These

issues include access to government information, class action and locus standi or standing.

I would like to focus my remarks today on two fundamental points expressed by Bill 9: standing and the right to a clean environment. The word "standing" refers to the right to pursue remedies in the courts and to appear before administrative tribunals. With certain exceptions, our legislation does not create any rights to environmental quality; instead it imposes obligations and duties on operators of facilities capable of causing pollution and gives power to government officials to enforce those obligations. Standing must be viewed in the context of the administration of those obligations and duties.

The bill creates a right to a clean environment and provides standing to sue for that right. At present, in the context of our legislation, the ministry has the standing to issue or refuse to issue licences, permits and certificates of approval. However, if the applicant appeals a refusal or imposition of condition or conditions, the applicant and the ministry have standing before the Environmental Appeal Board but the neighbours of the facility or other concerned parties do not unless the board, in its discretion, grants this standing.

Traditionally, members of the public had no right to challenge government action or legislation even if it were unlawful, unless they could show they had a special interest in the matter. Moreover, of direct interest in the environmental context was the fact that members of the public concerned about public nuisance, that is the pollution of public resources such as air, water, fisheries, public highways and public parks, had no right to take action to stop the nuisance without the consent of the Attorney General. This naturally has been subject to criticism because it precludes access to the courts, not on the basis that no law is being broken but on the basis of who the person is, and, in effect, it sanctions law-breaking.

Standing is an issue in our legislation in two areas. First, only the Attorney General or the Minister of the Environment has standing to seek injunctions of violations of the environmental protection legislation administered by this minister; second, standing to appear before the Environmental Assessment Board and the Environmental Appeal Board is not clearly spelled out.

I support amending the environmental legislation to provide specifically for standing of others before the Environmental Assessment Board. Environmental groups have asked for this over

the years and, in this regard, we have the support of the chairman of the Environmental Assessment Board.

In regard to the right to a clean environment, failure to comply with an approval, order or other statutory duties is an offence. Every member of the public has standing to prosecute under our statutes. There is no barrier to private prosecution. The ministry has always supported private prosecution, including a statement to this effect in our abatement policy.

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In summary, I support this bill in principle. I think it is very worth while. In spite of what we may do in this House, our environment is affected very much today not only by what our neighbours to the south do but also by what happens on a global basis. We are affected not only by the fact that there are coal-fired generators in the Ohio valley which create much of our acid rain problem in Ontario, but also by the fact of what happens to the rain forest in the Congo.

We must, as we always have in this political jurisdiction of Ontario, trail-blaze. I believe we have the best environmental legislation anywhere in the world and we have the best technical staff for ensuring that people in this area comply with it. What we must do is sell the message to our neighbours to the south and to the world at large.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): The member for Lakeshore.

Mrs. Grier: Mr. Speaker, the member for Brock is going to take five minutes of my remaining time.

Mr. Partington: I would like to thank the member for Lakeshore for permitting me to join in this debate. I am pleased to join in this debate in support of Bill 9, An Act respecting Environmental Rights in Ontario. As I read that, I hoped that the word "respecting" not only meant "about" but also meant "pay tribute to," "focus on," "enshrine."

I looked at section 2 of the proposed bill, subsections (1), (2) and (3), and thought how important those sections are, how necessary the thoughts and the principles contained in them are to the future of our society. Subsection 2(1) says: "The people of Ontario have a right to clean air, pure water and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment."

It is only a short time ago that people settled in North America in the Great Lakes basin because

of an abundance of good land, plenty of wood, unlimited quantities of fresh water and a very moderate climate. The Great Lakes area and its people prospered and grew in numbers and strength as a result of that. But that very prosperity, that very growth has undermined and weakened the very reason for its being.

We have attacked the environment; we have laid waste our pure water and our clean air. We read daily of the polluting of our environment, be it the poisoning of our soils, the degradation of our water or the attack on the very air we breath, as we have recently learned with respect to the acid rain threat to us all. Only this morning, in the *Globe and Mail*, we see a headline, "Mist of Niagara Falls Carries Toxic Chemicals, U of T Researchers Say."

The mighty Niagara River, once a symbol of greatness, energy, strength and certainly nature's magnificence, has become, in a short time, an example of our folly, our environmental destruction, wantonly and with disregard to the safety and the livelihood of us all. Some day, we may through our concentration change that and make Niagara River a hope; may reverse the destruction of nature we have gone about.

I would like to say with respect to this bill and how important it is to us, that John Jackson and Tim Eder of Great Lakes United's Water Quality Task Force, in a summary they did of the water quality agreement, state, "The Great Lakes residents insist on being much more directly involved in decision-making that affects the quality of the lakes and the quality of their lives."

In another brief to a federal water inquiry, it has been indicated that there is an immediate concern for health in the face of increasing pollution and insidious toxic contaminants in drinking water. There is concern about the waste treatment and cleanup for our cities, our farms and industries; others worry about impact on fish and wildlife. Truly, the people of North America, the people of the world, are concerned as never before about environmental concerns.

The bill that the member for Lakeshore introduces today goes a long way to ensuring that we recognize those rights to clean air and a clean environment as fundamental, not only to good living but also to survival. It guarantees that the people of Ontario and, hopefully, others will take a lead, that they have a direct right to interfere. They do not need to leave it to others or to government; they can interfere in court action.

Clearly, given the reference to intervenor funding, they do not have to come to the government and hope that they might get money

to intervene and represent the citizens. There will be a fund and a board set up, and they will have a right to go there, provided that they bring to the hearing a focus in the interest of all. Money will be awarded so that they can clearly represent their interests and the interests of the people they support.

I think this bill is essential for Ontario today and for the citizens of Ontario. I am very happy to support it.

Mrs. Grier: I would like to thank most sincerely the members who have participated in this debate today, not only for their participation but also for their support of the legislation. I truly feel that we can move on and perhaps see enshrined in legislation the kinds of rights this bill envisages. That is the important thing.

While it has been pointed out that some of the aspects of the bill may be appearing in other legislation or may already exist in some form in other places in our law, what this bill does is establish the fundamental right of the people of the province to a clean environment. I have certainly found that people are very surprised to discover that they do not already have that right, that nowhere is it said, "You have the right to a clean Ontario." I am sure that many members of this Legislature will be supporting, and have been approached about the issue of enshrining property rights in legislation. How much more important it is to enshrine environmental rights. That is what I welcome the support for doing, and I hope we can proceed.

The member for Frontenac-Addington (Mr. South) has pointed out the need for co-ordination and the diverse places in which environmental legislation is found. That is one reason we need a bill like this that will pull together all the various environmental rights and privileges and access and participation and mechanisms that people need. By having it in one piece of legislation, we will have certainty and we will have a mechanism.

The member for Halton-Burlington points out, quite rightly, that this government has provided intervenor funding and has been more open to access and has provided more money to groups who want to participate in the process; but they have not set down any guidelines, they have not enunciated a mechanism and they have not given groups the certainty that they will have funding available to them if they want to participate.

When you embark on opposition or on participation in some hearing and you do not know whether you are going to be funded, it severely limits your ability to participate. A true

environmental funding policy would lay down the rules, let you know where you stood, what you were going to get, when you were going to get it and you could plan your activities based on that certainty. As the member for Brantford pointed out, in the absence of that certainty and in the absence of those rules, we might be subject to the whim of the government as to what group it was going to fund and what group it was not going to fund.

I have raised this matter of intervener funding at question period on many occasions in this House, and I am surprised, once again, to hear from the member for Halton-Burlington that we are awaiting legislative proposals from the Attorney General. When I last raised the issue with the Attorney General, I pointed out there was a very clear set of guidelines for intervener funding that he himself had enunciated during the hearings into the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. I do not know what we are waiting for and why we cannot put those in place and at least do that.

I urge the members of the government not to delay other pieces of intervention in proceeding towards an environmental bill of rights, merely because this bill today has passed second reading. There is a lot to be done. If they can proceed with intervener funding, if they can proceed with access to information, I am not for a moment suggesting that they slow down that process. What I am saying is, let us put it all together, let us enshrine our right to a clean environment.

I urge the members to support sending this out to a committee. I urge the government to allow us to have hearings early and quickly into the actual sections of the bill and then to call the bill for third reading so that we can say that this minority Legislature has truly accomplished something for the environment.

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DANGEROUS GOODS

Mr. Jackson moved resolution 1:

That, in the opinion of this House, recognizing municipalities have vital concerns with the movement of dangerous goods within their boundaries and that Ontario is the only province or territory in Canada that has not taken steps to control the movement of dangerous goods within municipalities, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment, with the technical and public input from affected municipalities, enact specific legislation to control the types of

hazardous goods and routes within municipal boundaries.

Mr. Jackson: I am both pleased and honoured to place before this assembly this resolution which would call upon the Ministry of Transportation and Communications in consultation with the Ministry of the Environment and with input from the affected municipalities, to enact specific Ontario legislation to control the types of hazardous goods and their routes within municipal boundaries in Ontario.

In recent years municipal councils and the public at large have been made increasingly aware of the potential for major disasters within our municipalities resulting from the transportation of dangerous goods and materials by road and by rail. This new awareness has led to the expectation that the flow of dangerous goods through urban municipalities should be regulated in order to minimize the potential for such incidents resulting in the loss of life and property. Indeed, action has been taken in all provinces but Ontario to establish some form of dangerous goods truck routes.

At present Ontario municipalities can regulate heavy truck routes within their boundaries, but the Ministry of Transportation and Communications has repeatedly stated, as it did to the city of Burlington on December 2, 1985: "Ontario currently allows municipalities to pass bylaws establishing routes for trucks under the Municipal Act. This bylaw-making power refers to any commercial vehicle and is not commodity specific."

In that correspondence from the manager of the operation, policy and standards office with the MTC, Mr. Brennan stated further: "To date there has been a reluctance to approve commodity specific routing since the government does not want to economically hinder the movement of goods any more than is necessary as long as public safety does not suffer. Any extension of the present bylaw powers should have to take into account economic factors such as local pickup/delivery patterns, connecting routes between municipalities and between the highway and other modes of transport, as well as connections with federal properties. These economic factors would have to be weighed against the object of public safety."

I suggest that the movement of pressurized hydrogen or chlorine or radioactive materials through a municipality are in fact issues of public safety that should be addressed by this Legislature, even if the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications is unwilling.

If a truckload of milk overturns outside a hospital or in a densely populated residential area there will be traffic lineups as a result, but if a truckload of pressurized hydrogen overturns in the same spot there are substantial risks presented; yet truck routes under current legislation do not treat one any differently than the other.

It was the early morning of October 18, 1985, when a truckload of pressurized hydrogen overturned on Lakeshore Road in Burlington. There were 140,000 cubic feet of hydrogen in that truck in 12 cylinders, and one of them split. It forced the evacuation of many residents in east Burlington. Had the truck been half a block further down the road it would have been in one of the most densely populated areas of my community. That truck should not have been there. The driver was lost. Yet he was there and the area had to be evacuated.

As Burlington Fire Chief Warren Corp pointed out to the city council, it was, in his opinion, the unsuitability of the route for the transportation of dangerous goods that needed to be looked at. Fire Chief Corp was concerned because there was a growing incidence of these kinds of situations, some of them occurring in very crowded, densely populated areas.

The aldermen, primarily Alderman Barry Quinn and Alderman Jim Ryan, were quite disturbed to learn that at that point there was no authority with the municipality or with the province to regulate in such an instance. So Burlington council agreed on March 10, 1986, to send a resolution to the municipalities of Ontario and to this Legislature. That resolution stated:

"That the Association of Municipalities of Ontario be requested to petition the government of Ontario to reconsider its position on the transportation of hazardous goods and to enact specific legislation enabling municipalities to control the types of hazardous goods and routes that these goods take within municipal boundaries."

The government should have listened to Burlington council because there is a growing support among municipalities across Ontario for the need to act on this vital issue. The councils of Oakville, Markham, Mississauga, St. Catharines—the home of our Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley)—Toronto—the home of our Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton)—and the regions of Halton and York have endorsed this resolution. Indeed, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario has endorsed this resolution, as amended in its operating paragraphs, and I quote briefly:

"That the Association of Municipalities of Ontario be requested to petition the Ontario government to reconsider its position on the transportation of hazardous goods and to enact specific legislation to control the types of hazardous goods and routes."

Indeed, the Ontario Traffic Conference, after consultation with municipal delegates, completed a final report with their position on dangerous goods truck routes in September 1986 and filed the following resolution:

"That the province establish guidelines for the control and movement of dangerous goods on public roadways; and that with both technical and public input from the affected municipalities, the provincial government designate dangerous goods routes through and around municipalities, using a permissive system, which regulates but does not prohibit the movement of dangerous goods to any area within the municipality."

Also, the council of the Municipality of Metro Toronto endorsed the position adopted by the Ontario Traffic Conference on September 30, 1986. There seems to be a common concern across Ontario that this province finally establish guidelines for the control and movement of dangerous goods on public roads. The case for a routing control to ensure greater public safety is a compelling one and it makes good common sense.

For example, dangerous goods routes would make it easier for our officials concerned with safety and emergency procedures to plan responses to possible accidents which could be very serious and require immediate action. As many traffic hazards as possible could be eliminated from the planned routes. For example, level crossings, limited manoeuvring room such as tight turns and narrow bridges, excessive pedestrian traffic, or subways or tunnels where gases collect, present extra hazards in the transportation of dangerous goods.

Preplanned routes would facilitate policing of the regulation as all of the traffic would be more easily identified in accordance with the limited regulations under the Dangerous Goods Transportation Act. Preplanned routes could be designated to direct dangerous goods traffic away from emergency resources centres, such as our hospitals, fire stations, police stations and other emergency facilities that would be necessary to control and to respond to those kinds of accidents. This response would be greatly inhibited if the facility itself was actually involved in the incident.

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Also, preplanned routes could be designed to direct dangerous-goods traffic away from heavy density institutions such as schools, plazas, commercial areas, hospitals and nursing homes. Preplanned routes could make it easier for our planning departments to plan use of the community with the knowledge of where these materials would be travelling. For example, industrial zoning could be encouraged on hazardous-goods routes and institutional uses discouraged.

Clearly, it should be realized that the lack of dangerous-goods truck routes in Ontario is a growing problem. Not only are hazardous chemicals a growing problem, but also hazardous biological material and, yes, nuclear waste.

Currently, notification of routes for some highly dangerous radioactive materials to local emergency planning authorities is required. However, these officials, our fire and our police chiefs, have no input as to what routes would provide the least risk to life and property. It is completely unacceptable, but unfortunately sometimes true, that they have been notified after the radioactive materials have passed through their communities. This is a growing problem that requires our immediate attention as legislators.

The issue of the concentration of chemicals or hazardous goods corridors should also be mentioned at this point. In September 1985 the Ontario Waste Management Corp. selected as its preferred site the township of west Lincoln in beautiful Niagara Peninsula. Although this site may not be operational for several years, plans call for an annual treatment and disposal capacity of over 300,000 tons of toxic material per year.

The Queen Elizabeth Way will become a toxic waste freeway. The increased concentration of hazardous waste traffic will present a significant and greater risk to communities like Mississauga, Oakville and Burlington as traffic proceeds over the Skyway bridge and on to Stoney Creek, Saltfleet and then Grimsby.

A comprehensive set of regulations governing the transportation of dangerous goods must be implemented here in Ontario before that Ontario Waste Management Corp. site becomes a reality. The provincial government has the authority to implement this resolution in the interests of public safety and in response to the very legitimate concerns being raised by our municipal leaders across Ontario.

My resolution calls upon the provincial government to enact specific legislation. It calls for consultations and municipal input. I ask all

members to join me in support of this resolution. The issue today for us as legislators is not who controls this regulating authority. The issue today is that we agree that regulations are required and are approved for a safer tomorrow.

The Deputy Speaker: The member has reserved seven minutes and 50 seconds for the windup.

Mr. Charlton: I rise in support of the resolution of the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson). I think it is appropriate that this debate occurs immediately after the debate on Bill 9 which we dealt with earlier this morning because they are issues that are directly connected.

The member for Burlington South made it clear that what he wants this morning is support for this resolution and not for the specifics of who should have the control and the regulatory authority ultimately. His resolution is silent on that matter. His resolution calls for the need for legislation.

However, in terms of my comments, I want to insert into the debate some aspects of this situation which go beyond those which have been raised by the member for Burlington South. I will start that out by saying that I happen to agree with the member for Burlington South that preplanned hazardous waste or hazardous substance routes are a useful approach for part of the problem because those preplanned routes can then be policed in a way that we cannot now police the movement of hazardous substances.

What we have at present is a situation where, although there are some regulations around the types of equipment and containers in which hazardous substances will be moved, there is virtually total freedom of movement of hazardous substances. The member mentioned that municipalities have the right to designate truck routes through their municipality, but they do not have the right to regulate use of those routes. Even more than that, they do not even have the right to know what substances are ultimately using those routes.

I do not mean to belittle the member for Burlington South but I want to tell him that Highway 401 north of Toronto and the Queen Elizabeth Way from Toronto to Buffalo are already a hazardous substances freeway, and have been for many years now.

We have a situation where hazardous substances can go virtually anywhere. There is no advance notification. There is no ability on the part of the local authorities to be prepared for the kind of accident the member described in his own

riding. There is no knowledge on the part of the local council, or more important on the part of the local citizenry, of the contents of those vehicles transporting hazardous substances.

This is where the connection comes between the previous debate this morning and the debate we are having now. Even the establishment of preplanned hazardous substances routes will only deal with part of the problem. Because of the ineffective way we have done our development planning over the course of the last 100 years, we have industrial complexes and in many cases individual industries isolated in inappropriate communities where, in order to get their hazardous substances to the plant or out of the plant, they are going to have to take routes that are inappropriate as preplanned hazardous substances routes because they are going through residential communities to get to the designated highway or whatever the case happens to be.

Because of that and in that context, we have to insert into this debate the question of environmental rights that we talked about in the last debate. We have to start informing municipalities, whether it is the province that ultimately regulates or whether it is the municipality that ultimately regulates. We also have to start informing citizens, because regulatory bodies in making their judgements in terms of regulating the movement of hazardous substances are going to make decisions, decisions which inevitably are going to contain an assessment of risk. The way in which they have approached that assessment of risk is something that has to become public knowledge, and the public ultimately has a right to respond to it.

I guess what I am saying is that not only does the movement of hazardous substances have to be regulated, but also ultimately we have to give the right to municipalities and communities within municipalities to fight to stop the movement of a particular hazardous substance through their community when it feels it has not been fairly dealt with in terms of the determination of what is an acceptable risk.

Many would say that kind of process could throw all kinds of economic consequences into the industrial arena in southern Ontario. I spent four years as the environment critic for this caucus, and I want to tell the members those four years became the most intensive learning experience of my life. I learned a lot of things about a lot of dangerous substances, but I also learned a lot of things about the need to use those dangerous substances.

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There have been a number of studies done around the world, in North America, and by organizations right here in Toronto, about pollution, hazardous waste and the need for pollution and hazardous waste; and even about making profits from pollution prevention. The studies show that in most cases the hazardous substances that are taken into a plant and then removed from that plant in a dirty state can be recycled, reused and cleaned by the addition of certain processes in the plant itself to reduce or eliminate the need to move that hazardous substance in and out of the plant on a regular basis.

It has also been shown that the additional technologies to make those kinds of things happen can often produce a profit. We find a number of things happening. Sometimes hazardous substances are shipped in and out because of habit, because the operator of the industry does not know there is a cost-efficient process for cleaning and reusing that substance. Often, the operator is using a particularly toxic or hazardous substance because it is slightly cheaper than a less dangerous alternative. Often you have combinations of both, where a change in process and a change in the substance you use can resolve the problem of the need to transport those dangerous substances right from the outset.

The ability of the public—the individuals past whose homes these hazardous substances are being moved, the risk-takers in this society: the people who work in the plants, the people who live on the routes where the substances are transported—to bring pressure to bear to stop the movement of that hazardous substance can be resolved in a number of ways.

It can be resolved by finding alternative routes; it can be resolved by finding an alternative substance; or it can be resolved by forcing the industry to look at an alternative process in the plant itself. The solutions are not simple, but if we do not give the public the right to bring that kind of pressure to bear, old habits, old routines and the urge to reduce costs between a more hazardous substance and a less hazardous substance will ultimately leave us in the lurch. We have to deal with those questions in the legislation the member is talking about.

Mr. Haggerty: I wish to join in the debate this morning dealing with the resolution of the member for Burlington South, particularly on the matter of who has responsibility and authority in directing the movement of hazardous goods through a municipality. I concur with the

previous speakers on the matter, because it is a serious problem out there in the municipalities.

I represent the area of Erie, which has a number of trucks carrying radioactive waste from the American side on through to Detroit. I always understood that when these particular trucks would move through a community the municipality was notified of the movement of that hazardous material.

Sometimes, some place along the line, somebody forgets to notify the local emergency task force, such as the fire department, in the municipality. That is a great concern when we put all the responsibility upon municipalities, particularly fire departments and those who are in the emergency task force in a community.

There is often a cost to bear. I think in his comments the member for Burlington South mentioned the Ontario Waste Management Corp. locating in west Lincoln. There have been reports to say that about every three minutes there will be a truck going through the little village of Vineland, a quiet community there. That is through the day, I understand from what they tell me, and I suppose if we look at that we could have a backlog of trucks from the site all the way right through to the Queen Elizabeth Way. They could be parked on every street in those communities without some rules that apply to say, "We want to reduce the possibility of an event, an accident or even the potential risk of an accident."

I am concerned about that; but then again, when I look at the regulations we do have, the Dangerous Goods Transportation Act for the province that parallels federal legislation, and then we come in with deregulation of the trucking industry from the American side that is supposed to parallel federal legislation on the American side, then we can come back and take a look at the spills bill act. Just take a look at it though; I am trying to bring a point home here.

Take a look at all those laws, acts, legislation and regulations that somebody back in a municipality has to be concerned about. I suggest that a number of members visit local fire departments and see what efforts they are trying to make to catalogue all the toxic chemicals that may be transported on our highways and even through the Welland canal, because it is an area that they really cannot cope with, yet we are willing to shove more responsibilities on municipalities.

The member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton) mentioned recycling as an area the government should be moving into to neutralize some of the toxic chemical waste of these plants.

Often, the argument comes forward on the matter of trucking, and even the matter of locating the Ontario Waste Management Corp. in the Niagara region.

The reason it is located there is that it is central. It will cost too much to move it to some remote area in Ontario. "You have to put in the cost factor," that is what they tell us, which I cannot agree with; but I am suggesting to members, although there are regulations under section 210 of the Municipal Act, they can do that.

Of course, I give credit to the local politicians. They are clever enough to say: "Yes, we know there is hazardous material here. We can designate that as a truck route." For example, in the former county of Welland, the Webber Road going through Vineland and into Welland was there to generate the truck route into the heavy industrial sector; the Niagara region, we might say—Niagara south.

But I want members to take a look at a bill that perhaps many of us have forgotten. This followed the derailment that took place in Mississauga. It is the Emergency Plans Act. This was put forth by the Solicitor General at that time, Mr. Taylor.

He said, "Municipalities, of course, have initial responsibility for responding to an emergency situation. They have hospital, ambulance, fire, police and other essential services located within their boundaries."

I thought one particular paragraph in there should be of interest to all of us. He said:

"I believe this is a valuable piece of legislation which will assist municipalities in making immediate and effective response to emergencies. I also wish to mention that the bill complements the laws regulating the transportation of dangerous goods and the program in place to protect the environment from adverse effects of spills and other accidents."

When I take a look at that bill, what he is saying, the intent of that bill, is that the municipalities have a right to designate a preplanned route for moving hazardous materials or goods in municipalities.

The whole point is, if we keep on bringing in more legislation and more legislation, by the time those who have to respond to that crisis or that event look down to see what action they should be taking, the response time could be delayed considerably.

I agree with the intent of this, and that is more initiatives should be given to the emergency plans of the municipalities.

1130

This afternoon I will be introducing my own bill, the Good Samaritan Act, An Act to relieve Persons from Liability in respect of Voluntary Emergency Medical First Aid Services. If we are going to have such plans as are already on the books and if we want to complete a sound emergency plan, then we are going to have to give relief in other areas.

When you get an event of the nature of what happened in Mississauga, if you have an accident of that nature—and a spill of toxic chemicals could happen again anyplace—you have to muster every human resource that is available in a community or municipality to be able to respond to that event. For example, we have to look to St. John Ambulance to respond. We should be looking for nurses, people who are well qualified in medical first aid treatment and our hospitals to respond. Until we get into an area to say that we want a complete emergency plan in an event, the government of the day—and the government of the past should have done so—should come in with a Good Samaritan Act so we can put all our resources together in the event of a spill or an accident. I suggest that legislation is there now if we want to respond to it.

I know the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications are always reviewing the transportation of dangerous goods throughout Ontario. I suppose when one looks at that, they are going to be coming up with some new ideas, new programs or new plans. I think one of the areas they should be looking at is designating a truck route that can carry hazardous materials. I suggest the more deeply we get into this thing, we see that recycling is something that perhaps should be looked at in some areas. The government should be moving in that area.

I think of the Ontario Waste Management Corp. locating in the peninsula between two large bodies of water. Just think of what the consequences would be if there was ever a spill, an accident or an event occurring there. It could get into either of those lakes. We talk about the serious problem on the Niagara River and the pollution in that area; just think of what could happen there.

I believe there is enough legislation under Bill 2, the Emergency Plans Act, 1983, that the municipalities can move in that area to control the movement of hazardous materials.

Mr. Gregory: I am very pleased to stand and speak in favour of the resolution of my colleague the member for Burlington South. He has read

the resolution. I want to touch for a minute on the real dangers we face and some of the results we have had from toxic waste spills.

I recall very clearly the evening of November 10, 1979. I had the pleasure to speak in St. Catharines at a nonpartisan meeting, and I was the designated speaker. I left for home shortly after 11, between 11 and 12, and driving home from St. Catharines on the Queen Elizabeth Way, my daughter, who was with me, and I spotted across the lake a very bright light.

From that distance, my first reaction was that this was the burnoff from the petroleum storage area down in Clarkson. Of course, as we got a little closer driving along the highway and kept seeing flashes, this got larger and larger. We started speculating with some trepidation about what this was. The immediate reaction we both had was that surely a jet had crashed at the airport, which is just north of my riding.

Naturally, as we got closer and closer to the area and kept seeing these flames getting higher and higher, we began to get very concerned. It was not until we got home and caught some newscasts that we began to get little glimpses of what it was. This, of course, was the infamous Mississauga rail disaster. This has nothing to do with roads, but it does not much matter when you are in a situation like that whether it is a railway tank car or a truck tanker exploding. The results can be just the same.

In this particular instance, what happened was that the tankers derailed and some exploded. As a matter of fact, I found out the next day that some tank cars were blown 200 yards through the air, if one can imagine this, into adjacent fields. That is a long way for a tanker to have gone sailing through the air, farther than most of us can hit a golf ball.

We have quite often heard Mayor McCallion refer to the Mississauga miracle. Perhaps that language is a little strong, but when one considers that had the chlorine gas escaped—chlorine gas was used during the First World War because it clings to the earth and travels with the earth and goes down with the valleys into the shell holes and that sort of thing—with the wind patterns in Mississauga the wind would have blown the gas directly and primarily in a southeast direction and the gas would have covered the Queen Elizabeth Way.

It is a proven fact that when automobiles drive through chlorine gas, the chlorine stops the automobile. In other words, it comes to a stop. I do not know the mechanics or the chemistry of that, but that is exactly what happens. One can

imagine that had that chlorine gas covered the Queen Elizabeth Way going through Mississauga, with the many thousands of cars that would travel late Saturday night—most of us have driven at some time on Saturday night and we know what it can be like—one can imagine the horror of that happening or the horror if the gas had blown towards the residential areas, which were not too far from it.

My friend the member for Erie (Mr. Haggerty) mentioned the Emergency Plans Act that was brought in by the former Solicitor General. One example of the success of that occurred during the hurricane in Barrie. They give credit to that act in the setting up of an emergency plans committee for the control of the disaster, the saving of lives and that sort of thing.

We did not have that sort of thing enacted at the time of the Mississauga disaster, but between the Peel Regional Police and the Mississauga Fire Department, with a lot of help from surrounding communities' police forces and fire departments; and with very active leadership from the Attorney General at that time, Roy McMurtry, from her worship the mayor, the chief of police of Mississauga and the chief of the fire department, the result was not one loss of life; not one person lost his life as a direct result. I believe there was one as a result of some senior citizen being moved, but that had no direct relationship to it.

The miracle that caused that was that when the tank car exploded the majority of the chlorine gas was blown into the air. I do not know but I guess chlorine dissipates in the air, and I do not think there were any bad results from that. Rather than spreading along the ground in every direction imaginable, it blew up into the air so that the risk of that chlorine gas was removed.

One cannot imagine the psychological feeling on Sunday morning, which was the first opportunity I had to go to the site to see it, and then coming home about an hour and a half later to find that my whole district had been evacuated. As I drove along the street and attempted to turn into my subdivision, I was stopped by a police officer. I was able to prove who I was and ask, if the area was evacuated, that I at least be given the opportunity to evacuate my family, which I had to do.

1140

A hundred thousand people were evacuated from Mississauga that day. They were placed in school gymnasiums, in community centres, in what hotel space there was available, and it was very difficult to do. I was fortunate I have my

parents in Toronto and I was able to move my family there. I am not trying to relive that, because we all heard about it. In fact, it made Mississauga famous and certainly did not do Mayor McCallion any harm either.

The fact of the matter is it became a very well known city, ironically because of a disaster. The point of the whole exercise is that whether it is a railway tanker or a truck tanker that goes up, the results can be basically the same. When we see these tankers going around, in the few instances that my friend the member for Burlington mentioned about actual happenings, about spills, we realize this could happen in just the wrong area.

If the Mississauga disaster had been planned, it could not have been planned better, because it happened in an area that was approximately two miles from the nearest housing subdivision. There was room even for the tanker car to blow 200 yards and land in the middle of a field and for the gas to be blown upwards so that it did not affect the community. It truly was a miracle. We cannot count on this happening again. If a tanker truck full of chlorine gas were to have an accident in the middle of a subdivision somewhere, could we hope for a second miracle? I think not. It becomes a matter of time.

The resolution is an intelligent one. This matter has been approached before and previous Ministers of Transportation and Communications have said they could not do that. In the two years since there has been a new government nothing has been done either, so I do not think it is a matter of casting blame for its not being done. I think it is time it was done. I really feel it is important, because I do not think we can generally give every municipality the right, the authority to set those routes for hazardous trucks.

I think we have to be very careful. For example, we cannot give the council of the village of Podunk, wherever that is, or Pumpkin Corners, which sits on the Trans-Canada Highway, the right to reroute transport trucks off the Trans-Canada Highway, around the village and back on to it again. I think that would be carrying things too far. However, with some discretion, the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Transportation and Communications can, on a selective basis, give municipalities that right, and this is precisely what this resolution is directed at.

Mr. Speaker, I think my time has run out. Thank you very much.

Mr. Reville: I am delighted to rise to speak in support of this resolution. I do so with a great

deal of history behind my wish to support this resolution, because as an alderman in the city of Toronto I had cause to be concerned about the transportation of dangerous materials.

I am sure there has been much discussion of the Mississauga disaster. I can think of a disaster in my own ward, when I was an alderman, which, thankfully, was not a fatal occurrence. It related to the transportation of nitrocellulose between two warehouses. Unbelievably, there was an entrepreneur who was speculating in nitrocellulose, which is the main ingredient of dynamite.

Somewhat more than 100 drums of this material were transported from one warehouse to another, where subsequently they caught fire. The whole southern portion of what are currently the ridings of St. David and Riverdale were evacuated. The firefighters were particularly concerned that there might be loss of life, not only of residents but also of firefighters. It was a very serious situation that points up the pressing need for mechanisms to regulate the transport and, indeed, the storage of hazardous materials.

I remember a very urgent conversation I had with the fire chief at that time, who was obviously worried that many of his firefighters might lose their lives in that situation. I think it is even more important when we are thinking of volunteer fire departments, because they do not have access to the kind of database that a Toronto fire department might have with its computers and what not. We are sending out volunteers to deal with situations they may not have any information about at all. There are placarding systems and routing systems that could deal with many of these very grave dangers.

I must say that both the current and previous governments at the provincial level and at the federal level have been derelict in their responsibilities of protecting the safety and lives of not only innocent passersby but also those whose job it is to go into hazardous situations day by day. There is, indeed, a federal responsibility in this regard, and I hope that should the resolution pass, which I assume it will, the mover of the resolution will want to include consultation with the federal authorities, because they have jurisdiction in the transportation of goods across provincial boundaries.

One of the things I think the resolution points to quite sharply, and I am sorry it has not been mentioned, is the failure of both the current government and the previous government to deal seriously with the whole question of right to know. I am talking about not only the right to

know in the work place, so that workers know what kinds of hazards they are exposed to, but also the right to know in the community, so that people who live around industry to which dangerous goods will be transported and in which dangerous goods will be stored and processed can know what kinds of dangers they are exposed to and appropriate measures can be taken to prevent not only worker injury but also threat and injury to the community.

I think it is absolutely shocking that our Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), in this as in so many other regards, has been foot-dragging shamefully, has been goofing around with work place hazard management information systems, which really does not tell anybody much about anything, rather than serious right-to-know legislation, rather than a labelling kind of approach.

There is a whole question of toxicology that needs to be addressed seriously if there is a spill of naphtha on Highway 401. What is that going to do if there is a chemical cocktail, as often happens when particular chemicals are exposed to other chemicals or to the elements? What kind of hazards are we as residents of Ontario, and as police officers and firefighters, going to be exposed to?

When I was still an apprentice plumber, I had an employer who sent me out to deal with a drainage problem in a public housing project. This points up two problems. One is the way in which public housing projects are constructed and the other is the way in which employers treat their employees.

I was sent out with this material to try to unclog the drainage system. I put the recommended amount into the drain and immediately got a 40-foot cloud of vapour and poison. I still have scars on me today. I was given no protective equipment whatsoever—

Mr. Haggerty: You did not read the label.

Mr. Reville: It was quite interesting; the label said absolutely nothing. The label said: "Do not eat this. It has MSG in it." I did not eat any.

Mr. Haggerty: I thought that was the position you were in. You did not know what you were doing. You were not an expert.

1150

Mr. Reville: We are getting some good advice from across the hall from a person who has absolutely no knowledge of the subject. That is fairly typical and I do not find it unusual at all.

I find it regrettable that it is well known that many of the products we are able to create in our

society come without instructions that even a simple apprentice could understand. In some cases, apprentices are more simple than others, but they deserve to be protected from the known effects of substances, as do all the people who abut highways. The communities through which the highways unravel should be protected.

I am delighted to see the resolution by the member for Burlington South. I presume one of the reasons the resolution is before us is that there are a number of high-traffic roadways that go over the bridges and down the lanes in that area of the country. For any of us in Ontario and in the rest of the country for that matter, we need to be really serious about the transportation of dangerous materials. We need to embark on the consultation process that has been recommended here. I believe there is much we can learn from the residents of the municipalities and the local representatives of municipal councils and township councils who have to deal daily with the concerns of their constituents about what may be lumbering through and what those spooky signs mean on the backs of various kinds of tankers and other vehicles.

There are a number of issues. I think the issues have been well canvassed here today. Let us get on with the real work that would flow from this resolution. I urge other members of this Legislature to support it, notwithstanding that I have accused both the Liberals and the Tories of dragging their feet on it. Now is the time for them to stop dragging their feet. The New Democrats, I believe, will be cheerful to support this kind of initiative.

Mr. Jackson: At the outset, I would like to thank my colleagues from the third party, the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) and the member for Hamilton Mountain, for their kind and generous comments of concern with respect to the safe passage of this resolution.

It was particularly appropriate today when we have also had on the morning's agenda the bill of the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier). I believe there is a connection between the two. In fact, the whole area of right-to-know legislation, of responsibility to inform our citizens, particularly of problems with the transportation of nuclear waste, is an issue I am pleased to see has not escaped the attention and concern of all the members of this House.

I want to thank my colleague the member for Erie for what I guess I should stylize as his cautious and somewhat conditional support for the resolution.

I note with interest that the member for Scarborough East who is the Minister of Transportation and Communications is unable to be with us in the House today. He is recovering from a very serious illness and I know all members of the House will join me with wishes for his safe and complete recovery. I know he would be in the House today to listen to this rather important resolution affecting his ministry. However, I am disappointed the member for St. Catharines (Mr. Bradley) was unable or unwilling to be here to respond to both of these resolutions.

The member for Erie briefly mentioned the spills bill. I have to remind the member that it is not a document that at least the official opposition felt was the proactive type of legislation required for Ontario in the 1980s and the 1990s. That bill only lays blame. It only fixes liability. In fact, it only allows our police chiefs and fire chiefs to be able to respond to the media and say, "That is who is to blame." In no way does it address the requirements in Ontario to be proactive to reduce the incidence of spills. I think this resolution should be considered seriously by the government because of its proactive approach.

The member talked about the Emergency Plans Act. It is a rare moment in this House when we have members of the governing party crediting the former government for any piece of legislation. I thank him for his kind support for the previous Attorneys General.

Still, that bill should go further. What we are hearing is that the police chiefs, particularly my police chief and fire chief to whom I talked yesterday, indicate they want dangerous goods routes designated in their communities so that they can co-ordinate and plan response times and not have to deal with the point the member raised about the gap of having to react after having found out all the facts involved in a specific case.

I cannot help but highlight one point. It has to do with the whole issue of substance control and this new government. I find it rather odd that this government has expressed open willingness to let municipalities decide on whether beer and wine should be sold in local corner stores, and yet there appears to be a reluctance to let municipalities decide on dangerous goods routes. That form of contradiction on substance control is a matter of public record and I hope it will be corrected soon.

It is clear that there are definitely preferred routes for the movement of dangerous goods throughout Ontario municipalities. Each municipality has unique characteristics, as has been

stated by the members of this House speaking to the resolution. In particular, I want to mention my colleague the member for Mississauga East (Mr. Gregory) who eloquently advised us of the unique circumstances of a rather hazardous spill that occurred in his riding.

I ask that all members of this House approve this resolution for a safer Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: This completes the debate. However, the standing orders state very clearly that the vote must be taken at 12 of the clock.

Mr. Gillies: It has to be that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Pierce: Ad lib it for a while.

Mr. Speaker: Really? Perhaps I can have the agreement of all members.

Agreed to.

ONTARIO ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACT

Mr. Speaker: Mrs. Grier has moved second reading of Bill 9.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs. Grier: May I ask that the bill be referred to the standing committee on resources development for hearings and discussions.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Does the member not want it to go to the environment committee?

Mrs. Grier: That is a select committee. I want it to go to a standing committee.

Mr. Speaker: Is there agreement? Generally it goes to committee of the whole House, but if there is unanimous agreement it is perfectly in order.

Agreed to.

DANGEROUS GOODS

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Jackson has moved resolution 1.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Jackson: May I ask that the resolution be referred to the standing committee on resources development.

Mr. Speaker: The member can ask anything he wants. To my knowledge that has not been done in the past. It is not the usual procedure. If it is a bill, it is fine. There is no objection to asking but there is nothing in the rules that says it has to go.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We are not in favour of that occurring.

The House recessed at 12 noon.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr. McLean: I have a statement for the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). As he knows, both the Oak Ridge steering committee and the mental health centre's advisory board committee have brought to his attention the critical shortage of clinical, research and support staff required for providing adequate treatment services to patients at the Penetanguishene facility. In total, approximately 90 additional staff members are required to meet the day-to-day needs at Oak Ridge.

I am seriously concerned over the recent reports from the mental health division that additional funding for the province's psychiatric hospitals will not be forthcoming. The hiring of additional staff cannot occur if funding is held at current levels. The funding restrictions have placed the senior administration at Oak Ridge in the untenable position of being expected to make improvements at a time when the minister has tightened his purse-strings. A great deal of enthusiasm has been generated within Oak Ridge over the positive steps that have been taken to improve treatment services for the patients, and I hope this momentum continues to the hiring of additional staff.

Will the minister instruct his officials to review the steering committee report and immediately improve additional funding for Oak Ridge? On April 7, I sent the minister a letter requesting a clarification of a statement he made with regard to closing Oak Ridge, and as yet I have not received a reply. Will a new facility be built on the same property?

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Martel: Today I received a call from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) suggesting that my colleagues and I meet with him to discuss the matters that were raised in the Legislature yesterday. My colleague and I refused because we did not want to be precluded from raising matters we might learn about. We passed that information on to the Minister of Labour and got a later call indicating that everything we would discuss would be on the table, at which point I suggested the minister should make a full and complete statement in this Legislature.

I smell a rat in this situation. The night that the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Minister of Labour and my colleagues from the Sudbury area met at the Levack mine, the first thing the company told us was that there was a man working in a place where he should not have been working. My antenna went up right away, because that was dwelt on in a great deal of the discussion.

I turned to the Minister of Labour and said: "I want you to find out what the practice is. Do not tell me about the policy of the company. I want to know what is the practice of having workers working above where other workers are in a shaft."

I was never more shocked than to learn yesterday that criminal charges had been laid, which would preclude an inquest. Members have to understand that in all situations involving mining fatalities an inquest is compulsory, and that precludes it.

PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr. Mancini: Yesterday a question was asked of my colleague the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) concerning Holiday Beach Provincial Park in the riding of Essex South. I just want to let the House know that a number of years ago, under the Conservative government, the park was put into private hands against the wishes of the local member. Since that time, the park went into complete disrepair and it was probably in the worst condition of any provincial park in Ontario.

After the Liberals assumed the government, I approached the minister with the same proposition I had made to the Conservative government, to turn the park over to a public body such as the Essex Region Conservation Authority, and the minister did. We made a public announcement in the riding, we worked along with the local municipalities, and now the park has been improved substantially and its usage has gone up.

While there was a technical error made in not notifying the Ministry of the Environment 30 days prior to the change, the park in fact has been upgraded. It is in the hands of a public institution, and this government has done something I asked it to do when the previous government would not even acknowledge my request.

Mr. Warner: Only Liberals can lose an entire park.

Mr. McClellan: They lost a whole park.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Cochrane South.

Mr. Pope: Yesterday the minister did not even know where it was.

CITY OF TIMMINS

Mr. Pope: This is the 75th anniversary of the city of Timmins. There has been delivered to each member's mailbox, or there will be within the next day, a calendar of events issued by the municipality, Mayor Vic Power and the chairman of the 75th anniversary, Bill Boychuk. This calendar of events indicates the kinds and wide diversity of events that will be taking place over the summer months.

I urge all members to attend the city of Timmins during the 75th anniversary, and while they are in the great riding of Cochrane South, it is the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Abitibi-Price and therefore of the beginnings of the community of Iroquois Falls. Summerfest '87 is on from July 22 to July 27.

It is also the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Matheson in the great riding of Cochrane South, and the Matheson Agricultural Society is planning a number of events to honour that anniversary.

If members come to the great riding of Cochrane South, to which they are all invited, partially at my expense and partially at their own expense, there is a wide variety of events and features to be offered to them and their families.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: It seems that the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) has decided he is going to elevate delay and indecision to an art form. It has now been four years since Scarborough General Hospital, in consultation with the other public hospitals in Scarborough, determined there was a need for a renal dialysis unit to serve our community, and yet there is no decision, no action on behalf of the government.

Every time I raise it, the answer I get from the Minister of Health is, "Well, we are making progress." A centipede with fallen arches moves more quickly than this government. We are tired of waiting.

But more than that, the minister will know, as other members sadly know, that a young Scarborough man died last year simply because he was on a waiting list for a renal dialysis program. That tragic event could be repeated unless this government shows some leadership—which is uncharacteristic of the government, of course—and releases the money needed so that we

in Scarborough can benefit from a renal dialysis program.

1340

FARM LABOUR

Mr. McLean: I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) the great problem that many farmers are having across this province with regard to farm help. I know the pools he has established are supposed to be helping the farmers across the province to get help, and I know of many farmers in my area, including my son as one, who cannot hire farm help.

I wonder what the minister is doing to promote the agricultural offices, the Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology and the different schools to try to encourage young people to be involved in the agricultural industry and to try to help these farmers who are badly in need of farm help.

I do not know whether the labour pools across the province are doing their job fully, but I would appreciate it if the minister would look into it and try to establish a system whereby the people in this province, the farmers who are being successful, can get help.

PROPERTY SPECULATION

Mr. Reville: I would like to address this statement to the parsimonious member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon), who, in his crossing of the divide between this side and that side of the House, forgot that a speculation tax used to appeal to him a lot but now does not seem to.

I think particularly of Yorkville-by-the-Water, which in other terms is Harbourfront, where people are making down payments for stuff that does not even exist and may not exist. In fact, units in one project started at \$90,000 and are now being sold for \$180,000. If that is not speculation, I do not know what is.

I think this government should move on it and bring back some of the ideas it thought were so lovely while in opposition to protect home buyers so they can get a place to live in this province.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

PROVINCIAL-MUNICIPAL SOCIAL SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: As the recent speech from the throne indicated, "We recognize that individuals, neighbourhoods and communities best know their own needs, and we will involve

them in planning and choosing the services they require."

Today I wish to announce an initiative which is designed to improve social services right at the grass-roots level. We want to improve and clarify the joint roles and responsibilities for social services shared by the province and Ontario's municipalities.

To that end, I have appointed the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review Committee. The committee will examine current provincial and municipal roles and funding responsibilities for social services and make recommendations for a more rational, co-ordinated and comprehensive approach.

We will be facing a number of difficult issues and attempting to answer some thorny questions, which will include: What are the strengths and weaknesses, on a program-by-program basis, of the existing service delivery and cost-sharing relationships? How should the respective responsibilities of the province and municipalities for the delivery of social services be reconciled? Should municipalities be given more or less responsibility for the delivery of social services?

There are three partners in this review: the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association and my ministry.

The committee will be jointly chaired by Ron Book, representative of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and chairman of the social services committee for the regional municipality of Niagara, and by Colin Evans, executive director of strategic planning and intergovernmental relations for my ministry.

Also representing the Association of Municipalities of Ontario are Nancy Smith, a city of Ottawa alderman and chairman of the social services committee of the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton; Roger Taylor, mayor of the town of Elliot Lake, and Dick Picherak, commissioner of community services for Metropolitan Toronto.

The committee has three representatives from the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association: Phil Johnston, commissioner of social services for the regional municipality of Waterloo; John MacKinnon, administrator of social services for Huron county, and Alan Wells, commissioner of social services for the regional municipality of York.

Finally, three senior officials of my ministry, two of them assistant deputy ministers, have agreed to serve on this committee.

The recommendations of this 11-member committee will shape the basis for provincial-municipal relations in social-service delivery and cost sharing for the next decade.

The committee's report will be ready within 18 months. At that time, we will act decisively on the recommendations it contains. This government is committed to continuing to work in partnership with the province's municipalities to ensure our system of social services is the best it can possibly be.

RESPONSES

PROVINCIAL-MUNICIPAL SOCIAL SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr. Andrewes: I am pleased to be able to respond to the statement of the Minister of Community and Social Services, in which he, of course, announced yet another government review, another committee to put forward suggestions for his ministry.

I want to congratulate the minister particularly on his choice of Ron Book, regional councillor for the town of Grimsby at the Niagara regional council level, as joint chairman. Ron Book has for a long time taken a very strong interest in the social services field, has distinguished himself in that field and has brought to the Niagara region a perspective on social services that lends itself to his role in this committee. He is also known to have great foresight and to champion certain political causes and was seen at a particular nomination meeting last week supporting a candidate of his choice.

The minister has alluded in his statement to the challenges that face this committee and the challenges of the inequities in the social services field. Those inequities that exist between communities across the province are indeed severe. The committee's role is to identify some of these inequities. I hope it will reach some conclusions that will allow it to make recommendations to the minister that will attempt to balance the haves with the have-nots across this province. That is the role of the provincial government. Certainly, the municipalities in the past have sought great direction from the government in trying to balance that situation.

As it identifies the shortfalls in the system, I do not want this committee to forget some real concerns that exist in my own region and right across the province—concerns such as children's mental health, speech therapy and the continued deinstitutionalization of developmentally handicapped people in our communities. These are challenges that are challenges today, and I am

sure and confident the committee will be addressing them.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: It often amazes me the time we spend on statements by ministers when other gaps are left yawning. I would have thought the statement for today would have been from the Minister of Labour around the matter that was raised yesterday about the laying of charges. I cannot believe that has not come forward.

Instead, what we have is the production of a new committee to study and not to report for at least 18 months, according to what the minister is telling us, with a very confused mandate.

What is the present role of the Social Assistance Review Committee? Is it not to look at some of these issues as well within its parameters? The answer is yes.

Is this committee supposed to wait to do anything until it sees what Judge Thomson says, and are his recommendations to wait until this committee has had a chance to review them in the future?

There are some very good people involved in this, I will admit—some wonderful people from the various municipalities—who will come and sit down and discuss things. Phil Johnston will be pleased to be on this again after he finishes with the Social Assistance Review Committee this fall some time, or perhaps the minister expects him to do both things at once in the interim.

When the minister is talking about actually co-ordinating social services delivery and how the funding of that should take place and about how the delivery mechanisms should be headed, is it not kind of strange that he would come through with something that has no connection with the Ministry of Health? How is it that he is going to start talking about the delivery of social services to the elderly in municipalities around Ontario and how that should be done when he does not have anybody from the Ministry of Health or the health sector on this thing? It is absurd.

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When the minister is dealing with youth, how can he possibly talk about social services delivery to youth in Ontario without involving the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) or people from boards of education around Ontario? They are not involved. That is also preposterous.

I suggest that the minister also needs to be involved in the correctional side of things and young offenders questions, if he is going to be dealing with a review of social assistance in Ontario. All he has created is an excuse for inaction by himself for another 18 months, to use

it, as he is using Judge Thomson's committee, as an excuse not to do anything for the disadvantaged in our society.

This is not a necessary formalized committee. This will be a good working group to work with an interministerial committee here at the Legislature, but, in my view, it is muddle-headed. It is another excuse for delay by a government that knows not what it should do towards the poor and disadvantaged in this province.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Harris: I have a question to the Minister of Financial Institutions. It was two weeks ago today that he called his news conference to announce his intention to cap auto insurance rates. At that news conference, from sheets I have here, it was specified that the mandate of the rate review board was "to set ranges for all types of motor vehicle insurance." Yesterday in this House, the minister said the rate review board will determine all insurance rates, including fire, home owner and theft. Can the minister tell us today which of his two statements was correct?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Yesterday, I was responding to a hypothetical question placed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) as to what would happen if rates went up in other lines of insurance, based on the cap or the rate review board we had for auto insurance. I was saying that when it examines automobile rates, the rate review board will take into consideration all factors that may influence those automobile insurance rates.

Mr. Harris: Given the continuing confusion surrounding this issue, I suggest the minister may want to check the Hansard and some of the comments he made outside the Legislature. I do not think that is what he said at all. In fact, it appears as though he is perhaps calling the plays here from the line of scrimmage on this issue. I might add that as he is calling these audibles and the automatic plays, one would wonder whether they are even in the playbook of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to start with.

None the less, the minister will acknowledge the amount of confusion he has created with two different statements. Until yesterday, the discussion was only on auto insurance premiums. If he wants to check the Toronto Star of this morning, he is quoted as saying, "Our rate review board is meaningless, if it just sets a rate for autos." That is his opinion.

Mr. Speaker: And the supplementary question is?

Mr. Harris: Can we ask the minister why he has not been straightforward from the beginning on his true intentions for the auto insurance industry?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The intention of this government is to provide rate review for automobile insurance. Having said that, we want to make sure that there is not any cross-subsidization, that the industry does not decide that if it cannot do it in auto insurance, it is going to raise rates in all the other sectors of personal line insurance. We are going to make sure that the rate review board and the insurance advocate monitor those rates to make sure they are not being adversely affected by what the companies are doing with auto insurance.

Mr. Harris: Now that we have established that the minister does not appear to be any less confusing on this issue today than he was yesterday or in the past two weeks, perhaps I could go back to his original news conference and subsequent statements in the House where the minister has said that public auto insurance has not been ruled out.

Given his expansion yesterday of the mandate of the rate review board, perhaps he would clarify this statement for us and confirm that, in fact, the government of Ontario has not ruled out public auto insurance and is considering a complete takeover of the entire insurance industry.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: This government has said all along and I as a minister have said that I do not prefer government auto insurance. Having said that, I have Justice Coulter Osborne looking at the whole area of no-fault insurance. He is looking at who should be delivering it, whether it should be the private sector or the government sector. If it can be shown that is the only route this government can go, we would have no choice but to examine it. That is what I was saying then and I am saying it now.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am certain there is a member who would like to ask a question.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Rowe: I have a question of the Minister of Health. As the minister will know, I have raised the question of the government funding for a new hospital in Barrie on many occasions in this House. Instead of responding to these legitimate inquiries, the minister accused me of failing to

understand the priority-setting procedures of the ministry. While the minister may enjoy this game, he simply is putting the lives of many seriously ill patients at risk. Why does the minister continue to play politics with the residents of my riding instead of getting on with the job of health care?

Hon. Mr. Elston: We are not making any type of game out of funding our health care system. Our system is being planned. The programs that should have been done many years ago now have to be put in the framework of our fiscal abilities. We plan to provide the services that are available for all of us to look at.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot tell you how outraged I am at this gentleman standing up and accusing us of playing politics with a health care facility. That does not occur; it will not occur. He should know better.

Mr. Rowe: I have in my hand two letters to me from the minister, one he intended me to receive and one he clearly did not intend me to see. In the latter, the passage that is scratched out by the minister's own pen reads as follows: "I expect to make a public announcement regarding this matter in the very near future."

Clearly, the minister is in a position to announce funding for the new hospital today. Why is the minister withholding critically needed health care services from the people in my riding for his crass political gain?

Hon. Mr. Elston: There is no such thing occurring. The honourable gentleman wishes us to make statements and announcements at all turns. He will know, as everybody else in this world will know, that all our decisions must be made on the basis of fiscal planning along with everything else. We have several priorities that we are examining even now.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I would love to make announcements every day of the week. I must do the planning that is required, and it has to be done in a reasonable process. We will do that when we are able to come up with conclusions which provide us with the ability to find the funds that are available to make the facilities workable for all the people there in Barrie and area.

1400

Mr. Andrewes: I want to remind the minister that it was one year ago that we asked the Premier (Mr. Peterson) about the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie, after the death of a woman in the corridor of that hospital. I also want to remind

him about other projects we have spoken about in Orangeville; in Dufferin and Peel; in North Bay, where he put a two-year delay on announcements for that facility, and in Timmins where he has delayed the announcement for two years.

Now we have an errant letter, dated one month ago, in which he clearly indicated his intent to hold off making these announcements until it was politically propitious for him to do that. Are people in need of health care in this province to wait until the Premier calls a provincial election before they get health care services?

Hon. Mr. Elston: Throughout the process of almost two years of our mandate, we have been making the announcements as the planning has been completed. That gentleman will know that there were a number of projects on which his group of people—he was a cabinet minister—made announcements for which they had absolutely no planning put in place at all. He did not have the allocations and yet those people opposite went ahead and made a plethora of announcements for which there was no planning or allocations in place.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I will ask all members to control their feelings, thoughts and comments. I ask them to be reasonable.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. Alan Douglas Brown died on September 6, 1985. He was a Ministry of Transportation and Communications employee working over a culvert when he fell into a flooded creek. He was not provided with a lifejacket.

I raised this matter with the minister on May 7, 1986, and charges were laid against three ministry officials in June 1986. The trial was held on April 25, 1987, in Peterborough, where the case was thrown out, due to the fact that the statute of limitations was exceeded. Under the Public Authorities Protection Act, subsection 11(1), the limitation for prosecution is six months.

Can the minister tell me why it took him six months-plus even to lay a charge and the statute of limitations was exceeded, yet he fairly panted yesterday laying charges three weeks after a fatality in Sudbury? What the hell gives?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am well aware of the results of the trial in Peterborough in the charges that arose out of the Alan Douglas Brown fatality. I can inform the honourable member and the House that the ministry plans an appeal to the decision of the judge in the case.

Mr. Martel: That is helpful. The question was why they were so anxious to lay charges yesterday, three weeks after, yet they spent seven or eight months, after being prompted in this Legislature, on another fatality.

I have another supplementary on laying charges. I raised the matter of Allied Heat Treat in this House in November 1985. In March 1987, 16 months later, I got a report that told me the following: "There was inadequate ventilation. There was no protection over the salt bath which caused the roof to corrode. There was inadequate protective equipment provided to the workers. The noise levels were exceeded. No data sheets were provided. No health and safety committee was in place. There were hazards of lead and potassium cyanide." Tell me why this company did not have charges laid against it.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: My friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) will be aware that a complete and thorough investigation was carried out regarding all the concerns that were raised. Indeed, he has alluded to the letter I wrote to him on March 30 this year.

I want to say to him and to the House that a complete and thorough investigation cannot always be completed and compliance achieved overnight. We wanted to assure ourselves that this was done. I want to emphasize to the honourable gentleman that all orders issued to the company were complied with by April 1986. The orders, I am advised, were issued to promote good engineering practice, not because of any high levels of a substance, as air quality tests did not indicate levels above the acceptable standards under our regulations.

Any consideration of a prosecution and charges in this matter would have been carried out by the appropriate ministry officials, and I am just a little shocked that my friends over there seem to suggest that perhaps there ought to be continuing ministerial, political interference in that process.

Mr. Martel: I think the minister has responsibility for this act. That is what he is supposed to be there for. Did nobody tell him that yet? Somebody should. He has only been there two years.

Let me ask him another question about his legal branch. Last year, as a result of 13 inquests, charges were laid in eight cases. The judge threw out charges on eight cases. His ministry withdrew charges against supervision in eight cases. In the five cases in which the ministry proceeded, the average fine for a fatality was \$3,540. Life is pretty cheap: \$3,540 is the average fine.

Against the company, they lay charges under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Against the worker, somebody from the Ministry of the Attorney General allows charges of criminal negligence. He should tell me what is wrong in that crazy legal system those people are trying to run over there. Workers are the guinea pigs in a place where management has the responsibility under the act and all the power in the act.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am not going to comment on the specific situation that occurred at Levack, but I must say I find it almost incredible when we have a judicial system in place in this country and in this province in which, as I understand it as a nonlawyer, we expect a degree of independence will be provided to certain individuals and to the police—

Mr. Martel: Before the inquest. Do not be a clown. There is an automatic inquest.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: My friend who is continuing to interrupt—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the minister take his seat, please. New question.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Laughren: I too have a question for the Minister of Labour concerning the deaths of the four miners in the Levack mine in my constituency. The minister now has had a day to reflect on the actions taken by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) in complicity with his ministry. Can the minister tell us whether officials of his ministry were consulted by the police before the charges of criminal negligence were laid? Were the minister or his officials consulted before or when those charges were laid by the Attorney General? If so, why would he allow that to happen, given the fact that it eliminates the possibility of an inquest that could bring out a lot more details before charges would be laid?

1410

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The answer is no.

Mr. Laughren: Despite the fact the minister is responsible for occupational health and safety in this province, the police laid a charge without any consultation with officials of the Ministry of Labour. Despite the fact they were there during all the investigation, the police had no consultation with the Ministry of Labour officials. That is fascinating indeed.

In view of the fact certain things have transpired that prevent facts from coming to light, I would like to point out a couple of things to the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Speaker: By way of a question, I hope.

Mr. Laughren: Yes, by way of a question. Has the Minister of Labour heard, or does he understand yet, that at that mine site, the site of the accident, wire mesh screen was reported missing to the company two weeks before the accident and was not replaced, and a valve was missing on the air-lock gate and it had been out of order for two to three months? The work had been shifted to the day shift from the midnight shift, when mining does not occur. It does occur, of course, on the day shift. A hose was leaking water into that ore, which added both weight and mobility to the ore.

Given these facts, can the minister tell us why, in the name of heaven—why, in the name of anything that is decent or fair—would he sit by and allow that to happen: to have criminal charges laid against the worker when no charges are laid against the company?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question was asked, finally.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: If I might, since this does not fall under my ministry, I would like to refer this matter to the Attorney General.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understand that to be referred to the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Scott: As I indicated to the leader of the third party yesterday, as a result of his request, I have asked our officials to commence a review, which will be conducted at our office, to determine what investigation took place on the part of the police, the nature of the investigation and who, if any, had parts to play in the decision that was made to lay the charges. I do all that not because I suspect any impropriety but in order to respond to the request the leader of the third party made, that a stay should be issued so the inquest could now proceed in advance of the criminal charges.

I hope to have a complete statement about the result of that investigation, which will at least assure that the House has all the facts, at the earliest possible time next week.

Mr. Laughren: I find it truly beyond belief that the Minister of Labour was not consulted before these charges were laid. I have a question back to the Minister of Labour, if I might, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I am sure the honourable member is aware that the question or supplementary question must flow out of the response. We have discussed this. I would ask the member to

place his supplementary to the Attorney General.

Mr. Laughren: I will ask it to the Attorney General then. I assume the Attorney General knows the history of laying criminal charges for industrial accidents or mining accidents. As far as we know, there has been only one time when this has occurred in the province, and it was not successful. The charges ended up being withdrawn or thrown out of court, whatever.

I am wondering if the Attorney General could, for once in his life, put aside his legal mumbo-jumbo and do what is decent and what is fair and withdraw the charges against Mr. Kuhle?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I cannot withdraw any charges in that sense. What I can do is stay them. As the leader of the third party indicated yesterday, he wanted me to consider doing that, and I indicated that I am prepared to do that. I think it would be an interference with the administration of justice. My friend may regard it as mumbo-jumbo if I made determinations about the propriety of the charge before the evidence has been heard.

Mr. Martel: They did that too. They laid the charges that way.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The honourable member will know that under our system the police, for better or for worse, have a responsibility, and the whole purpose of the development of our law system, which the member may not find acceptable, is to separate the police, in so far as possible, from political control.

The political control that is permissible under the Criminal Code is a control that takes its form through the stay that an Attorney General can issue. As I indicated yesterday, I am prepared to consider, because the leader of the third party asked for it, a thorough review to determine whether this is an appropriate case for that to be done, but frankly, I do not have an answer on that matter for the honourable member today.

I recognize the very great priority that should attach to it and I hope to have an answer as soon as possible early next week.

Mr. Pope: When it came to Wyda Systems, LSI Applications and the Vaughan land sale, the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) gave directly the opposite answer.

Mr. Speaker: Of which minister is the question?

UNEMPLOYMENT IN NORTHERN ONTARIO

Mr. Pope: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the Minister of Natural Resources

(Mr. Kerrio) and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), my question is of the Treasurer, the Deputy Premier (Mr. Nixon).

By the government's own statistics, layoffs in northwestern Ontario in 1986 increased over 1985 by 250 per cent. Layoffs in northeastern Ontario increased by 48 per cent in 1986 over 1985. With the government's bungling of the softwood lumber issue, layoffs have, if anything, accelerated rapidly over the past few weeks in northern Ontario.

Over the past year and a half, we have asked specific questions about what policies and programs the government was putting in place to help these workers, their families and the communities in which they live. Over 12 months after we started this process, I now go back to the original question. What programs and what policies has the government put into place that will put the laid-off steelworkers in Algoma Steel back to work; the iron ore workers in Wawa back to work; the forest products workers in Nakina back to work; the laid-off workers in—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member take his seat?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I understand there may be an opportunity to discuss this matter more fully later this afternoon. If I were to list the variety of programs that have been initiated by this government over the last year to attempt, at least, to alleviate the difficult situation which the honourable member has described, I would be far beyond the time limit Mr. Speaker would award me.

In my opinion, one of the most effective initiatives taken by the government of the day has been to move a number of ministries to the north.

Mr. Ashe: The Ontario Lottery Corp.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is right. As a matter of fact, it is more than 1,200 jobs, with a payroll of well over \$40 million. No one would suggest that this is going to put all the laid-off steelworkers, lumber workers or miners back to work, but we have a variety of programs that are intended to stimulate the economy of the province, to assist renewal of economic growth that suffered so tremendously over the last five years and to get on with the sort of development that members on all sides of this House would certainly support.

Mr. Pope: The government's own statistics prove that it is a lack of economic growth since this government came to power that is the problem in northern Ontario. That has caused the acceleration of layoffs. It has been since this government came to power. There have been no

initiatives to employ laid-off workers in northern Ontario. Section 38 funding is at an all-time low.

I repeat, what programs and projects does the government have to put these laid-off workers back to work, not the generalized mumbo-jumbo the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology has given us for a year? What programs does it have to put the laid-off workers in the resource sector back to work? What are they?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I suppose one of our aims is to try to depoliticize the rhetoric that tends to surround a difficult situation. The honourable member, being a northerner himself, must surely realize that while there may be an attempt to win some votes on his part, his concepts and content do not assist the northerners in any real way.

He has accused me of generalizations, and I have specifically referred to the 1,250 jobs that have been announced by a variety of ministers on this side, which is an extension of the responsibility of this government to decentralize the responsibilities of government into the north. There have been many years when, as a senior minister, the honourable member had a chance to do that, and he failed.

1420

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Martel: I have a question of the Attorney General. I want to go back to yesterday's announcement of the charges being laid. Is it not a fact that, in this province, there is automatically an inquest into mining fatalities? If that is the case, can the minister tell me if the regional police contacted Hervé Sauvé, the crown attorney in Sudbury, and did the crown attorney contact the minister's office to get approval or to discuss the possibility of laying the serious criminal charge against the one worker in Sudbury, and if there was approval given, can he tell me why?

Hon. Mr. Scott: To answer the honourable member's first question, as I understand it, there are a number of instances where fatalities occur that inquests are mandatory. I think of certain deaths in hospitals, for example, as one such case; and though I do not have the Mining Act, it may very well be that in mining circumstances a death triggers an automatic inquest. That is my understanding as to the first question.

With respect to the second question, my present advice is that my office was not contacted prior to the charges being laid. I hope to have a full report about that matter next week, when I respond to the request that the honourable leader of the third party has made.

Mr. Laughren: Given the seriousness of the charges and how outrageous they are, given the fact that the laying of the criminal charges immediately meant there would be no inquest, does the Attorney General not think it was fundamentally wrong for those charges to have been laid without consultation?

Hon. Mr. Scott: Frankly, I cannot say that. As the honourable member knows, there are two persons whose support is required for the laying of a charge. First is an informant who will make an oath; normally a police officer, but quite often an ordinary citizen. Second is a justice of the peace, who will accept the information and issue a warrant or effect an arrest on the basis of it. So anybody can lay a charge if he is prepared to make the oath and if he can find a justice of the peace who will issue a warrant on the oath.

A police officer, or indeed any other person, is entitled to obtain legal advice, if he wants it, before he proceeds to the justice of the peace to ask for the issuance of a warrant. In certain cases, it is normal for the police to ask the crown attorney to determine whether the evidence on which they propose to act is adequate for the purposes of the Criminal Code. One of the things we are inquiring about is whether that took place in this case and what considerations were brought to bear when that inquiry was made.

NURSING HOMES

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Health. The minister will have seen the ads placed by the Ontario Nursing Home Association in daily papers which suggest that old people living in nursing homes in Ontario funded by the Ministry of Health are receiving less care and attention than those living in other institutions.

I wonder if the minister might comment on the differential in funding between Ontario nursing homes and municipally run homes for the aged.

Hon. Mr. Elston: I think the member has narrowed the comparison which was originally made in those advertisements. He has now narrowed the comparison to municipal homes for the aged and nursing homes. I do know that there is a differential in funding, and it has arisen largely because of the historical nature of the facilities which developed to provide care for our seniors over a long period of time. It is no secret that in this province the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne) is looking very aggressively at how we can rationalize the extended care system around Ontario to try to deal with any questions

of differentials in funding with respect to care for our seniors.

I can tell the honourable gentleman that work is proceeding and that in the meantime, our speech from the throne makes commitments to assist in terms of staffing. We will proceed to do the correct planning to put that into place. Of course, we also have to wait for things like budgets and other items to be determined and finalized so we can proceed to deal with all questions of policy that are brought up and that are of an important nature for us here in this House.

Mr. Andrewes: These advertisements allege discrimination in the care of elderly people in the province; discrimination that stems from a differential in the funding mechanism. Are the ads factually correct? If they are, is the minister going to continue to tolerate that differential and that form of discrimination, or is he going to wait for a provincial election to resolve it?

Hon. Mr. Elston: We have the speech from the throne, which clearly indicates that we are moving to address the questions of funding and staffing levels. It has been no secret that the hearings on the Nursing Homes Amendment Act indicated that people wished us to place more emphasis on staffing. We know that there is a requirement for a different style of care now in our long-term facilities.

The honourable member will know that the statistics that are quoted there do not reflect the status of every not-for-profit home in Ontario. It is a generalized statistic, which can tend to reflect not quite accurately the true state of affairs in the not-for-profit extended care section of the ministry of my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney). I think we would all have to note that if we wished to move ahead with addressing problems in not being able to provide care in certain facilities—and we are doing that. Working with his help, I know that when the amendments come before us, we will put an act in place that will assist us to develop a certain philosophy.

I also might say that Deer Park Villa, which we opened in Grimsby yesterday, is another way of addressing it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think that is a fairly complete response.

BEEF CATTLE MARKETING

Mr. Hayes: My question is to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. The minister has indicated that he is prepared to make changes to the Ontario Beef Cattle Marketing Act. One of those changes

would be to allow a nonrefundable checkoff for the Ontario Cattlemen's Association.

Will the minister assure this House that he will not proceed with the changes to the Ontario Beef Cattle Marketing Act until the total beef industry is given time to review the facts and also have input into this proposed change?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The beef industry has had an opportunity to make input into the decision reached by the Ontario Cattlemen's Association at a vote that it had at its convention last year that there be a nonrefundable checkoff. At that time, I informed the Ontario Cattlemen's Association that I wanted all the beef producers apprised of the action that I was prepared to take, but that the association had to make every effort to inform all beef producers to get out to the meetings and to express their views on a nonrefundable checkoff.

That was done. Every county association had a meeting and took a vote on whether it wanted a nonrefundable checkoff. I have to say that a majority of the counties voted, with a large majority in every county, for a nonrefundable checkoff. Then I spoke to them at their convention and told them the conditions I expected of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association before I introduced an amendment to the Ontario Beef Cattle Marketing Act. If they are prepared to meet those conditions, I am certainly prepared to come into this House with amendments to the act.

Mr. Hayes: I just want to make one thing clear to the minister. The Ontario Beef Producers for Change are not objecting to a nonrefundable checkoff. What they do object to is giving that total power to an organization that does not represent the interests of all the beef producers in Ontario. When is the minister going to stop bowing to the special interests of one group and stop continuing to ignore the concerns of all the beef producers in Ontario? That is exactly what he is doing.

1430

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is the only association that is recognized under the Beef Cattle Marketing Act and as the agricultural association, so it is the body that speaks for the cattlemen. The Ontario Cattlemen's Association pays out about half of what it receives by way of a checkoff towards advertising. The rest of the money is used to put out information to the beef producers and to put out a newsletter. All beef producers in this province are benefiting from the advertising and the information that the Ontario Cattlemen's Association sends out.

If the Beef Producers for Change want a different marketing structure established, they know the procedure they have to follow. They go to the Farm Products Marketing Board with a petition. The Farm Products Marketing Board then contacts me and I then will go to the county with a plebiscite to get the views of all cattlemen on what kind of marketing system they want.

AIR QUALITY

Mr. Harris: I have some questions for the Minister of the Environment. Many North Bay residents are concerned about the health effects as a result of suspected emissions and odours from the neighbouring Reichhold chemical plant. Complaint after complaint of nausea, sickness, headaches and other ailments have been documented and forwarded to his ministry over the past year. I see the minister flipping through his books, so he is well aware of the problem. Can the minister explain why he and his ministry have failed to submit an air quality report to the area medical officer of health for interpretation, a report that the minister personally promised me in writing would be provided to all parties concerned, including me, by February?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I cannot give a specific answer to the member other than that it is a very busy ministry in that particular department of putting together materials because of the number of demands we have on the ministry. I think he draws a legitimate concern to my attention. I know it is not a new problem at all, as he has clearly indicated. It is a problem where there have been considerable complaints. I will be happy to gather the necessary information for him and report back to him. It concerns me when he says February; we now are into May. I understand that he would legitimately want to have that information and I will do my best to get it for him.

Mr. Harris: I guess I could question the minister's sense of priorities in that ministry. I understand it is busy but we are dealing here with a health problem. We are dealing with the local medical officer of health, who is concerned, and with people who are getting sick. They want to know.

The minister has taken sample after sample. In fact, last November, his ministry brought in the famous million-dollar machine to take the tests. They were done last November. The results have been kept secret. The citizens have tried to find out the results. Health has been trying to find out the results. Reichhold, the company itself, has

been demanding information month after month. They write a letter a month to the ministry saying, "Please give us the results so we can do what we can to help solve this problem."

Why is the minister or his ministry keeping the results secret? They were taken last year. When is he going to start acting to correct the problem instead of secretly going around collecting all this information for who knows what?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: It is ironic that someone from that side of the House and from that party would lecture me or this government on secrets and keeping secrets in the field of the Ministry of the Environment.

I want to indicate to the member, because I think he has brought a legitimate concern to my attention, that he will recognize that when tests are taken, they are taken across Ontario in many situations such as he has described. Those tests are then analysed and the report is put together and released. We do not keep secrets from the member in that regard, but I want to tell him that the problems are mammoth.

The people of Ontario know they have a government now that is prepared to investigate all these problems and is prepared to do all this testing and to go looking for problems. Of course, we have a much greater volume of work within the ministry but that does not alleviate the specific concern the member has, as all of us have in these circumstances. As I said, I will be quite pleased to investigate this matter and report back to him.

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Martel: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Can he give this House any information with respect to the latest fatality that occurred just this afternoon at Onaping mine, a holding of Falconbridge? I understand there will be a press conference at three o'clock. Can the minister indicate whether he knows of that fatality and, if he does, why he did not bother announcing it to this House?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am aware of this and I understand that my staff made the member's party, either the member himself or the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren), aware of this. I was so informed before I came to the House today.

I assume the member is talking about the fatality at Strathcona mine. The worker, who was a diamond driller, was found at about 10:45 this morning. I have very fragmentary information other than that the worker was apparently strangled by a metal cable while working on the

surface. Our officials are on the scene investigating. I did not raise the matter in the House because, as the member knows, it is not customary, certainly since I have been in this Legislature on both sides of the aisle, for a Minister of Labour to stand up and announce fatalities. We certainly regret this latest fatality and we are investigating it.

Mr. Martel: There have been eight people killed in my riding or my colleague's riding in less than eight months, starting with Dick Kerr and Robin Comba. I called a fellow the other night to talk to him, and he has been unconscious for a month. When is the slaughter of mining people and people involved in the mining industry going to stop? Hopefully, the minister will make sure that any investigation and any involvement of the police this time will result in a co-ordinated effort and not somebody running off ahead of time trying to win a kudo for himself by laying charges against a worker, as in the case of the four people killed at Levack.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am not sure I heard a question. I think the honourable gentleman knows that if there is a police investigation, and they investigate at their discretion, it will be conducted separately from any ministry investigation. Our investigation is already under way and will be a full and thorough one.

I share the gentleman's concern about the number of fatalities. One fatality is one too many and certainly we have had a very regrettably large number in the last short while. I do not want to leave the impression, in spite of these very serious incidents and indeed fatalities, that the situation in the mining sector is all bad. The member will know that last year in the mining sector, based on a figure of hundreds of thousands of person-hours worked, both the injury frequency and the injury severity were the lowest in the history of the mining sector. There are some very real improvements. Regrettably, we have not yet reached the stage where those improvements stop fatalities such as the one today and the others. We can only continue to try to seek that kind of improvement.

[Later]

Mr. Martel: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: A few moments ago, you heard the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) indicate to this House that his ministry had contacted my office and that of my colleague with respect to the latest fatality in the Sudbury area. To correct the record, I have to indicate to the House that this just is not the case. Neither his office nor my office were contacted by the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of privilege. Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

1440

RECYCLING

Mr. Polsinelli: I have a question of the Minister of the Environment, if he will take his seat. We seem to have been hearing lately about the problem of garbage disposal. Garbage disposal seems to be a problem throughout this whole province, but particularly in the large urban centres such as Metropolitan Toronto. It seems to me one of the practical ways of tackling the problem would be through the process of recycling. Is the minister able to tell us what his ministry is doing in terms of recycling?

Mr. Jackson: He is recycling that question.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: It is a good question.

Mr. Andrewes: They have been doing it in Grimsby for two years.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: As the member who represents Grimsby points out, for two years now we have had a recycling program there, and in Pelham and other municipalities. The Ministry of the Environment is actively encouraging recycling in Ontario. The members will recall that when we came into office, about \$800,000 a year was being spent on the promotion of recycling. That was immediately put up to \$2 million and last year there was \$4 million dedicated specifically to encouraging recycling through capital grants, through some assistance in operations, through processes and through helping them to advertise their programs.

As a matter of fact, yesterday I just happened to be in Guelph, and when I was in Guelph I was announcing some assistance and officially opening its recycling program at its request. I believe all municipalities in Ontario should take advantage of the considerable amount of money that is available. OMMRI, Ontario Multi Material Recycling Inc., has announced \$20 million from the private sector as well to go into recycling. It is really taking off in Ontario and offers people an opportunity to avoid putting those substances in the landfills.

Mr. Polsinelli: I thank the minister for his response. It seems his ministry is moving ahead in this area. As a supplementary, I would like to know whether he has any programs that are targeted to the large urban areas. I am particularly referring to Metropolitan Toronto.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: On public occasions, through speeches to various organizations, in-

cluding those organizations that have a direct interest in recycling in Ontario, I have certainly encouraged municipalities at all times, and I encourage Metropolitan Toronto and its various boroughs, cities and municipalities, to become deeply involved, as Mississauga now has, as the city of Kitchener has now, as Pelham has, so they can in effect direct those substances away from landfills.

If people would only consider, for instance, how many trees can be saved in Ontario by recycling paper, I would say they would want to look at that as one of the preferred options as opposed to always moving to other options that might be available.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I thank all the members for all their assistance in the last few minutes. However, I keep track of the time and I try to be as fair as possible.

Mr. Gillies: It must be hard, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Sometimes it is, I will say directly to the member for Brantford. New question, the member for Sudbury.

Mr. Gordon: The member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) must be out being recycled; otherwise he would have put that last question.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Gordon: I have a question for the Treasurer. Government reports show that northerners pay as much as four cents more a litre for gasoline, but my recent survey showed that in Sudbury the lowest price was 45.3 cents a litre. In Toronto, there are places where you can find it for as little as 39.1 cents a litre. In Chatham, you can find it at 40 cents a litre. Does the Treasurer think it is fair that northerners have to pay exorbitant amounts of money for gasoline?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I know there is a great deal of concern about gasoline tax levels in the north and elsewhere. I know that the honourable member, who has paid so much attention to this issue recently, will be aware that Ontario pays the third-lowest gasoline prices in Canada. I have been concerned about the level of tax.

Mr. Jackson: Earl's Shell?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member is wondering what is the source. If he looks at the Toronto Star, that well-known independent, international newspaper of record, for Friday, April 10, 1987, he will see that is where those independent statistics come from.

The revenues from gasoline tax since the government took office have been relatively

static. I regret to report to the member that as a matter of fact, our revenues from gasoline tax this year are somewhat lower than I projected in the budget last June, mostly because with the buoyant economy more people have been able to buy up-to-date cars with more efficient engines, and unfortunately for the Minister of Revenue less gas has been used.

Perhaps we can go on to the supplementary.

Mr. Gordon: It is always a pleasure to ask the Treasurer of Ontario a supplementary, particularly on a subject such as this.

Interjection.

Mr. Gordon: He was talking about gas, was he not?

I understand that at one time the Treasurer lived in Sault Ste. Marie, so he should have some empathy with northern people, the distances they travel and the amount of money it takes out of their pockets every time they go to those pumps. Will the Treasurer commit himself now in this House to lower the provincial sales tax in northern Ontario in the coming budget to provide northerners with more money in their pockets for food, shelter and the necessities of life?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member will know that unless he is recommending the government take over the actual control of these prices, and perhaps he wants to recommend that, lowering the gas tax would simply reduce the public revenue and leave the price the way it is or reduce it minimally. If the member were to look at the record in Alberta, at gas prices in Alberta, where there was practically no tax until recently, no tax at all, he would find that the price is the same there as it is in Ontario.

The fact that really concerns me is that the member, being a Progressive Conservative, would come on so strong on this issue when he will know that under Liberal leadership in this matter, the revenues have increased minimally during the years we have had the responsibility, at the highest 3.7 per cent. If he wants to look at the big tax grabs from gasoline tax, he has to go back to 1983-84 when the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) was the Treasurer and the revenue increased by a clear, cool 10 per cent. We are pikers compared to what the Conservatives did in those unhappy days before Ontario came into the land of fair and equitable tax policy.

Mr. Gordon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: What is your point of order?

Mr. Gordon: My point is, how does he explain that northerners are wearing these on all their cars?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: May I respond to the point of order? I am sure the Commission on Election Finances would like to know who is footing the bill for those bumper stickers.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sure the member for Sudbury would like to know he did not have a point of order.

1450

PENSION FUNDS

Mr. Mackenzie: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. The minister has introduced a moratorium on the withdrawal of surplus funds from ongoing pension plans. Nevertheless, the Oshawa Group Ltd. is using a surplus in the employees' pension fund to make its required contribution of \$3.4 million for this year. This is absolutely no different than if the company had applied to the Pension Commission of Ontario to remove \$3.9 million from the pension plan, except in this case such action is prohibited.

The 700 members of Teamsters Local 419 are being forced out on strike on May 16 over this pension issue in order to prevent the Oshawa Group from using the workers' money to make its corporate contribution to their pension plan. When will this minister amend his legislation to ensure that these surplus withdrawals by the back door are also prohibited and thus avoid the prospect of costly strikes and court battles?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I thank the member for the question. First, he should realize that those workers are fully protected. Before any surplus withdrawal, which is under moratorium, or pension contribution holiday is allowed, there must be 125 per cent full funding of all the obligations in that plan. I do not know the specific details of that plan, but I am sure the member knows that in some circumstances under the federal Income Tax Act, companies are compelled to have a contribution moratorium.

I would be delighted to look into that area and see what the situation is. But I should tell the member that there is no delay. Bill 170 has gone through two stages of reading. It has gone through the public hearings. We have a group looking at the whole area of surplus withdrawal and indexing, and a contribution holiday is part and parcel of that whole process.

PETITIONS

CLOSING OF ROAD

Mr. Pope: I have a petition signed by approximately 500 residents of the municipalities of Iroquois Falls, Matheson, Val Gagné, Timmins and Cochrane, which reads as follows:

"We the undersigned strongly protest the decision to close the Pierre Lake road from May 8 to June 30. The reasons outlined by the district biologist could be applied to any road, lake or river in this northern area. We question how valid these reasons are. The decision to close this road for any period discriminates against the public who have been using it since 1962. Therefore, we request the Minister of Natural Resources to consider revoking their decision immediately. This would allow for further study, while still allowing public access on this road."

That was presented to me yesterday by Ray Corcoran in Iroquois Falls.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I wish to table a petition which reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

It is signed by 132 persons, bringing the total now to 1,335, with more to come.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Reville: I have a petition in both English and Chinese from 30 residents of Toronto which says: "Bring forward Bill 80" and "Keep the Multicultural Promise."

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have a petition which reads as follows:

"We the undersigned...believe that currently automobile insurance in Ontario has reached a completely unacceptable level and that insurance companies are practising discriminatory policies against young people and in particular single males under the age of 25.

"We also believe that the only solution to this problem is the establishment of a publicly owned and administered no-fault insurance plan. We urge you to take measures appropriate to rectify this situation."

The letter which was sent to me said there are 825 people's signatures and that staunch Liberals and even Progressive Conservatives signed this petition.

MOTION

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTION

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Mr. Newman be substituted for Mr. Mancini on the standing committee on the Ombudsman.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MINISTRY OF FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT

LOI DE 1986 SUR LE MINISTÈRE DES INSTITUTIONS FINANCIÈRES

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 39, An Act to establish the Ministry of Financial Institutions.

L'hon. M. Kwinter propose la première lecture du projet de loi 39, Loi portant création du ministère des Institutions financières.

Motion agreed to.

La motion est adoptée.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I wish to reintroduce the Ministry of Financial Institutions Act, Loi de 1986 sur le ministère des Institutions financières. As members know, this act was first introduced on December 17, 1986. Unfortunately, it did not reach second reading before the House prorogued last February.

The Ministry of Financial Institutions was created in recognition of the need for a strong, centralized responsibility for financial institutions and private pensions in Ontario. This was necessary to address new developments in the financial systems both here and abroad and to implement a strong and enhanced regulatory environment for the protection of pensioners, depositors, policyholders and investors.

The act I am reintroducing today provides the legislative framework the ministry requires to meet all its goals and to fulfil its mandate in an effective and efficient manner.

VICTIMS OF CRIME BILL OF RIGHTS

Mr. O'Connor moved first reading of Bill 40, An Act to recognize and provide for the Needs of Victims of Crime.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. O'Connor: This bill provides that a victim of crime has the right to be treated with courtesy and respect for privacy by law enforce-

ment personnel and the media, the right to be provided with information relating to the prosecution of the crime for which he or she was the victim and the right to consult with the crown prosecutor concerning submissions on bail and sentencing of the accused. It also provides for the prompt return of the victim's property at no charge to the victim.

CLEAN WATER ACT

Mrs. Marland moved first reading of Bill 41, An Act to encourage the Rehabilitation of Water Delivery Systems in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Mrs. Marland: The purpose of this bill is to ensure a clean water supply by promoting and assisting in the rehabilitation of water delivery systems throughout the province.

1500

EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 43, An Act to amend the Employment Standards Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The purpose of the bill is to protect employees where persons contract out work or services so that the employees can maintain their seniority, wages, benefits and other rights they had before the work or services were contracted out. This bill deals with the terrible situation that cleaners and other service workers have faced in Ontario and is not a repeat of Bill 132. It is a bill that meets some of the objections the government held at the time.

LABOUR RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Mackenzie moved first reading of Bill 44, An Act to amend the Labour Relations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Mackenzie: The section being added to the act by this bill deals with various situations where there is an attempt to replace union employees or prospective union employees with nonunion employees or to replace an employer who is party to a contract or a prospective contract. It is a companion piece to the other bill that deals with the situation we have had with regard to the rights of cleaners being removed.

ONTARIO INSTITUTE OF THE PURCHASING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA INC. ACT.

Mr. McFadden moved first reading of Bill Pr65, An Act respecting the Ontario Institute of

the Purchasing Management Association of Canada Inc.

Motion agreed to.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr. Harris moved, pursuant to standing order 37(a), that the business of the House be set aside so that the House might debate a matter of urgent public importance, that being the government's failure, at a time when provincial revenues are at unprecedented levels, to address the problems faced by the citizens of northern Ontario, and specifically:

1. The government's failure to propose, in its speech from the throne, any solutions to deal with the serious problems of unemployment;

2. The government's failure to deal with the problems of the forest products industry;

3. The government's failure to provide direction to the northern regional development councils or to ensure their accountability;

4. The government's failure to follow through on its promise to equalize gasoline prices between northern and southern Ontario;

5. The government's suspension of plans to create four-lane highways in the north;

6. The government's failure to follow through on its election promise of a \$100 rebate to northern taxpayers; and

7. The government's continued delay in providing equitable health care for northern Ontario,

so that the views of this House can be made known to the Treasurer prior to the introduction of his budget.

Mr. Speaker: In accordance with standing order 37, I have examined this motion, which was submitted to my office at 11:28 this morning. While the motion seems to meet most of the criteria in standing order 37, I feel I must bring to the attention of the House the difficulty I have in applying standing order 37(b)(iii), which states that "not more than one matter may be discussed on the same motion."

On the other hand, I do appreciate that the seven items in the motion might be interpreted to read as examples of items to be raised in the debate. As I am just not clear, I would like to ask the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) to address this problem during the presentation of his arguments as to why this debate should go forward according to standing order 37.

I will allow members from each party to address this matter for up to five minutes.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, you have obviously taken the correct interpretation that would allow this motion to proceed. The seven points—and there are considerably more than the seven—are examples. I congratulate you on finding the interpretation that will allow you to find the resolution in order, and I concur with it.

In the very few brief minutes that are available to me to speak in support of the motion that we do indeed debate this matter and debate it at this particular time, let me also talk about some of the points mentioned that I believe support my contention.

We have a budget coming up in a couple of weeks. We had a budget a year ago that failed to address those concerns in northern Ontario in any appreciable manner. We had a throne speech a year ago that dilly-dallied and made some references, did a few things here and there, but really failed to address it.

We had a throne speech recently that we believe is an insult to northerners. We have our last chance—our last hope—with this government. I suggest that perhaps the last hope for this government is shortly coming up in the budget of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). That is why it is urgent that these matters be addressed today while there is still plenty of opportunity for the Treasurer to address them.

In addition to that, we have a grave concern in northern Ontario that the government really does not understand northern issues. The only answer we ever hear is that it is moving 1,200 civil servants to northern Ontario. Quite frankly, nobody disagrees with that. If you check over the record of the previous government, you will see that more and more civil servants were continually being moved to northern Ontario. Nobody disagrees with that. I do not think that is at issue here.

To sit back and say, "That is the answer for northern Ontario," without addressing many of the fundamental problems and difficulties we are experiencing, really starts to make you wonder whether they do indeed understand the north.

I want to remind the House, and I remind the members right now, of the lack of understanding that apparently is there and of why it is important that we bring that understanding to the House today. "A bunch of whiners and complainers" is what the Premier (Mr. Peterson) calls us in northern Ontario.

When the Liberals finally go up to have a conference and get some input, what do they do? They hire a southern Ontario consultant to prepare a report. They have not acted on a single

recommendation they heard in Sault Ste. Marie as a result of that.

The Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) says impaired driving rates are higher in the north because northerners have nothing better to do than drink and drive. That is his understanding of northern Ontario.

As well, we get a little offended when the only elected Liberal from the north in cabinet—formerly in cabinet—defends his personal problems by saying, “We have different morals up here in northern Ontario.” We do not have different morals up there in northern Ontario. That is probably the unkindest cut of all when it comes to the Liberal understanding of what life is like in northern Ontario and the problems we are facing in northern Ontario.

The government has a budget coming up where it can address a number of things it says in the throne speech. The Premier says that if we are going to solve the problems of the north, the solutions are going to have to come from the north. That is his statement, after two years. Northerners have been proposing solutions over the past two years that have gone ignored.

In fact, all three parties—and this government talked about the equalizing of gasoline prices. Now, one party may want to regulate gas prices, which we disagree with. We do not agree with that and we have been criticized for saying so. We have been asked, “Why did you not agree to regulate it 42 years ago?” We did not agree with regulating it then and we do not agree with it now. When the differential was 10 cents a gallon, we did bring in a lower northern licence plate. We did start to address some of those problems.

1510

Now, when we have a little more money in the bank accounts and the differential is anywhere from 25 cents to 50 cents a gallon, we are saying more has to be done. We do not apologize for the past, we do not apologize for all those things, but now is the opportunity to address those problems of today. The Liberals promised that two years ago in the campaign. We agreed it was a good idea. It was getting to be serious and needed to be addressed.

I see my five minutes are running out. This is just a taste of the hundreds of other items we plan to bring forward today for the consideration of the Treasurer.

Mr. Wildman: Mr. Speaker, we support the motion for an emergency debate, and I hope you will find it in order. When reading this motion presented by the official opposition, I read the seven listed matters as examples of the failure of

the government in its throne speech to meet the problems facing northern Ontario. They are indeed serious and emergent.

I hope the House will find that it is in order for this debate to proceed, so that members of the House can provide proposals for dealing with the serious economic problems that we face in northern Ontario, since the government could not bring itself to bring forward anything in its throne speech that would address those problems.

Mr. Speaker, in trying to indicate to you why we believe this debate should proceed, I am going to use my time to deal with one of the problems facing us in northern Ontario that is not addressed in the throne speech, that is, the effects in northern Ontario of the tax that has been imposed on softwood lumber as a result of the agreement between the federal government and the government of the United States which was acceded to by this provincial government, along with the other provinces.

In northern Ontario, we make about 10 per cent of the exports in softwood from this country. Unlike in British Columbia, in northern Ontario most of our softwood lumber producers are small, independent companies. Those companies cannot absorb this 15 per cent export tax as the larger companies in BC can. The situation in British Columbia is probably what led to the American disagreement with our system and the demand for the imposition of a tax, since the stumpage fees in that province are lower than in Ontario generally. But the effects of this imposition of the tax are only now being felt in the economy of the lumber towns across northern Ontario.

During the first quarter, most of those lumber towns did rather well, considering the imposition of this tax, largely because of the construction boom in the US. But as the demand begins to decline in the United States, in relation to the changes in interest rates in that country, we are going to see more and more layoffs in northern Ontario. I am also concerned that large companies involved in the export of softwood lumber, such as Kimberly-Clark in Kapuskasing, appear to be using the export tax as an excuse for speeding up plans they had to rationalize and to lay off workers.

Already, in the last three months, in direct relation to the imposition of the export tax across northern Ontario, we have seen approximately 400 jobs lost and we have hundreds and thousands more threatened. Yet we have nothing in the throne speech presented by this government that deals with that. The Minister of Natural

Resources (Mr. Kerrio) has said that the government would use the revenue from the tax to minimize the disruptions that lumber towns are going to face across northern Ontario.

We have also had the Premier state that the northern Ontario fund, which was announced in the throne speech, would be funded by the revenue from that tax. We in the north resent that a great deal, particularly those of us who have been fighting for a northern Ontario fund for many years. We believe that the fund should be funded through the revenues that accrue to this government, not hived off from a tax that is not really imposed by this government, and that the fund should be used to deal specifically with the problems of the lumber communities.

Frankly, the fund that is being proposed by this government is inadequate. They are talking about something like \$40 million a year when the layoffs in Sault Ste. Marie are going to take just that amount out of the economy of that one community in payroll per annum. Yet this fund is supposed to respond to all the problems related to the lumber layoffs and all the other layoffs that we are facing in northern Ontario.

It is completely inadequate and it is an indication of the inability of this government to deal with the problems of the north and the lack of political will for it to respond in anything like an adequate way to the serious economic problems we face in the north.

We hope, Mr. Speaker, that you will find that the motion is in order and that the House will agree to let the debate proceed so that we can have some ideas about what to do about northern problems.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I appreciate that the member for Algoma (Mr. Wildman) referred in his five-minute comment to the speech from the throne at least three times. As the honourable member knows, the order of business for this afternoon is a general debate on the initiatives put forward by the government in the speech from the throne, including those initiatives for the north. The fact that we on this side think they are not only adequate and imaginative but also very much in order and fair as far as the needs of the north are concerned, does not mean that we expect everybody to support it, even though any rational person looking at the facts would do so.

I simply point this out to indicate that it is not necessary to set aside the ordinary business of the day to have this important debate on northern matters. It is simply an indication of the desperation of the official opposition, and particularly the member for Nipissing (Mr.

Harris), to get into the act. In the last three days, the New Democratic Party members have simply outshone them completely. They have taken the initiatives in some of the most important and, in some instances, I regret to say, tragic situations.

The member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) is left yammering about gasoline tax even though it is clear that the biggest increases in gasoline tax were undertaken by the government when nobody other than the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman) was Treasurer. It is totally irresponsible of the official opposition to bring forward this particular motion at this time. I understand their sensitivity. Their situation is crumbling as member after member has announced he is not going to be prepared to face the music in the coming election, whenever that may be.

Now, I do not want to make too much of a point of this because I know about, and frankly I fear, the wrath of the member for Nipissing. Here is the man who is bringing this motion forward and, Mr. Speaker, you know that he, personally, has opened one of the largest and finest courthouses, built in his constituency, anywhere in Canada. He also has a firm commitment from the government to move one of the most important and productive ministries, a whole ministry, the Ministry of Correctional Services, right into the downtown of his own community.

The headquarters of the Ontario Northland Railway is in his backyard, together with the elaborate, beautiful headquarters there, and that is just a beginning of the list of the recognition that the government of Ontario has made of the needs of the people in Nipissing alone, that one constituency. I have not even referred to the tremendous commitments to the Ontario hospital in that area and the leadership that the Ministry of Health is giving in moving towards the provision of even better services.

The whole thing is somewhat irrational and it smacks of the kind of panic that has been the earmark of the initiatives taken by the official opposition in the last few days. Listen, I know the way they feel. I have felt that way in the past, and I have a lot of sympathy. If this is the way he wants to try to maintain the competition with the third party, that is all right.

In fact, the debate this afternoon is going to be one of a general nature and, if the emphasis is going to be on northern development by the decision of the two opposition parties, I guess we will have to live with that. We have learned to do that and the compensations, while they are very small, are there all the same.

1520

Mr. Speaker, I am glad you pointed out that under any kind of a reasonable reading of rule 37, this would be dismissed out of hand. The thing I really regret is that rule 37 is there so that the House can, in matters of emergency and special importance, set aside the business to undertake a debate on an emergency basis. The amendment the member has put forward is just the usual, run-of-the-mill, political hocus-pocus.

We will, of course, participate in the debate, but I wish we had the strength and the numbers simply to say that the House should proceed with its regular business, which would give every member an equal and fair opportunity to debate the contents of the speech from the throne, to support it or to criticize it, if there was anybody with that sort of erring judgement. As far as we on this side are concerned, we are opposed to the motion. We feel a debate should not proceed under these circumstances.

Mr. Speaker: I am certain that all members are aware of provisional standing order 37. In this particular case, because of the manner in which this motion came to my office and was placed before the House, I felt I should draw to the attention of the members, particularly with the first comments made by the member for Nipissing—I think he probably did not hear my comments correctly; however, I felt he may have somewhat compounded the problem I had by adding many more items.

I simply say for the future that members could be a little more careful in framing their motions. I will not say how this one should have been done, but I ask that all members be more careful in the framing of their motions so that they would be within the content of section 37.

According to subsection 37(d), there is nothing left for the Speaker to do but ask, shall the debate proceed?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Speaker: The debate will proceed. The member for Nipissing. I would like to inform you that all members have up to 10 minutes to participate.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You do not have to use it all.

Mr. Harris: Starting now. He just gave me the floor.

Mr. Speaker, as I read the rules, once you asked me to speak for five minutes, I assumed you had determined that the way we were going was in order. I apologize for the phrasing of the motion. I guess I could have had one item with little subsections; however, I appreciate your concern and I will bear it in mind in the future.

I am delighted to start this debate on behalf of my party and particularly on behalf of northern Ontario. I regret the Treasurer's comments in that he seems to feel there is some partisan aspect to the debate. Let me tell him that northern Ontario is probably the least partisan area of the province that I know.

It is an area where members of all political parties and all political philosophies get together, work together on projects, councils and school boards and, after elections are over, live and work together as one, speaking on behalf of northern Ontario. I mention that as another example of how the Treasurer, representing his party in his comments, has absolutely no concept, no idea of what life is like in northern Ontario.

As well, I guess I should not be surprised, but I am somewhat astounded that the spokesman for the Liberal Party would espouse today that Liberals do not feel there is a problem in northern Ontario, that northern Ontario is not having a problem and there is no reason why we should have this debate, that there is nothing of special importance up there; life is rosy and the money is rolling in in southern Ontario, so out of sight, out of mind.

Of course, for most of their members that is true. I really do strongly suspect that it will be out of sight and out of mind for all Liberal members after their next consultation with the people. I cannot imagine anybody in northern Ontario thinking that the Liberal Party, with the statements the Premier makes, that—I do not know what to call the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) any more, but whatever the heck he is called—and the other cabinet members, and now of course the Treasurer, in any way come close to understanding the problems in northern Ontario.

I was interested in the Treasurer's comments on the gasoline tax. I want to mention it only briefly. As members know, it is a main concern of mine at this time. The Treasurer keeps referring to who hiked the gas tax the most. That is not the issue. The issue is not how much tax is on gasoline. That is a separate issue, which I am sure is of concern to everybody. The issue is the differential between southern Ontario and northern Ontario. That is the issue the Treasurer does

not understand and the government does not seem to understand.

Come election time—two years ago, they promised they would do something about equalizing gasoline prices. Quite frankly, we do not care how they do it but we say it should be addressed. I have given the Treasurer one solution. I took the study his own government did. That has been their only response to their promise in the campaign of 1985. They did a study and thought the problem would go away.

The study proved beyond any doubt that prices were higher; on average, four cents a litre. Obviously, in many communities, as I am sure my friend from Algoma will talk about, it is much higher than four cents a litre. We are saying, at the very least, the Treasurer can reduce the tax in northern Ontario by four cents a litre and monitor the oil companies to make sure that is reflected at the pumps, that the prices do come down four cents and any increases or decreases across the province reflect that four-cent differential.

That is not a difficult concept to understand, but even today, the Treasurer talks about "Grossman did this and some Treasurer did that." That is not the issue. It is the differential. That differential has been growing and, in fact, going out of sight over the last couple of years in particular.

The differential between economic activity and opportunities in southern and northern Ontario has also been growing alarmingly over the last couple of years. Quite frankly, during what is referred to as the recession around here, 1981, 1982, 1983—"Woe is us, there is a great recession on"—there was not a recession in Sault Ste. Marie. Sault Ste. Marie did quite well through those years, in the early years. Let me tell you as well that some other areas of northern Ontario were doing all right. Some were suffering, but the general level of economic downturn was fairly consistent across the province, so that a solution to a problem for Ontario helped both the north and the south.

Now you have economic recovery and a big boom here in southern Ontario, and the recession is far worse in many areas of northern Ontario, but they do not think that is an emergency. They do not think that is important. That is just fine, because most of the seats are bloody well down here in Metropolitan Toronto anyway, so who cares about the north? Solve the problems in Toronto; solve them in Ottawa; solve them in London; solve them in the big cities. That has been their political agenda for the last two years.

Throw a few civil servants up in northern Ontario and then forget the rest. Forget the fundamental structures of northern Ontario; forget the fundamental problems.

There is a northern heritage fund of \$40 million. My colleague from Algoma pointed out that \$40 million is being ripped off from the companies in northern Ontario, the lumber companies in that softwood industry. This government went along with that. This government proposed it. When the 15 per cent tariff was announced, the Minister of Natural Resources said, "Hey, good news, boys: 15 per cent; lucky us." Sure, lucky in Hamilton or Niagara Falls—things are rosy there—but not so lucky in northern Ontario. There is a total lack of understanding of what is happening throughout the north. This government has had two years.

1530

Again, this throne speech talked about health care. Two and a half or three years ago, the former Minister of Health announced the associated hospitals program for liaison between northern hospitals and southern hospitals. He put that program into place and started having agreements. What did this government do? It cancelled it. Two years later, it is announced in the throne speech. Is the government going to do the program? No, it is going to study it now. It was cancelled once. Now it is going to be studied. That is a cruel joke, and we in northern Ontario do not appreciate it.

Let me give some examples from my own riding. The combined hospital is to go ahead in North Bay. It was ready to go two years ago—in fact, three years ago. I was disappointed; it should probably have been under construction two years ago. What has happened in those two years? Nothing. Nobody can arrange a meeting. Sure, there has been the odd meeting here and there, but it took two years to get a meeting with the minister to finalize the final negotiations that had to be put in place. That is what the government inherited—one more meeting to say, "Yes, let us go; here is the package." Of course, it took two years to get that meeting. This government has set back health care in North Bay by two years.

Another example is the four-laning of highways. There was an allusion to that in the throne speech. There is a place where the government can help northern Ontario with a few paltry dollars, compared to all the money spent down here on subway systems and on these wonderful transit systems throughout southern Ontario. With a fraction of the money, the government

can put into place a continuation of the four-laning programs. I guess what bothers me is that the only two years in which there has not been planning for more four-laning projects are the two years the Liberals have been in government. This year the final project on Highway 11, one that started four years ago, will be finished.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Not the one to North Bay.

Mr. Harris: The one to North Bay.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Oh, there is a gap in there?

Mr. Harris: That is right, between North Bay and Toronto; they kept moving up from Gravenhurst and then they started coming down from North Bay. There has been no planning; so now if the government makes an announcement, there is a two-year gap. There will be no construction going on for two years.

Quite frankly, the Treasurer has not been planning for the future very well anywhere in Ontario. It has not shown so much in the south where things are rosy, but it is showing in the north: the lack of planning, the two-year delay in doing anything up there and some big throne speech where the government thinks we should be happy with putting back some of those programs.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Thank you; your time has expired.

Mr. Harris: Did you want my attention, Mr. Speaker?

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, your time has expired.

Mr. Harris: I am glad my time has expired, because I know there are many other members here who want to speak, but the Treasurer has two weeks to bring down his budget and I remind him that people in the north will be watching.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wildman: As I listened to the member for Nipissing, I was reminded of comments made in the past by the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) and, I suppose, even by the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope). When those kinds of comments were directed at them when they were on that side of the House, they were characterized as gloom and doom. I wonder how the perspective changes when one crosses the floor.

I do not think the problems are any less important now than they were then, and I am glad that a transfer from one side of the House to the other has led the members of the Progressive Conservative Party to recognize some of the problems we have in northern Ontario. Some of

the potential we have could be used to resolve those problems. I regret very much that this Liberal government in its speech from the throne failed to take advantage of the potential we have to try to address some of the very serious problems that we have now, that are getting worse, that have worsened since 1982, and in the past two years have continued to worsen, but have been of long standing in northern Ontario.

As I said earlier, in the throne speech there was mention of the northern Ontario heritage fund. Apparently, it has now suddenly become fashionable for all parties to talk about a fund for northern Ontario, so I suppose we should be happy in this party at having finally won over so many people to the concept of actually returning some of the wealth that is generated in northern Ontario to the north, to help to provide diversification of the economy and jobs in the hard-hit communities throughout our part of the province.

As I said earlier, though, I am very disappointed in the descriptions, made outside of the House by the Premier, of how this fund would be provided for and the total amount that was possible; it really is a paltry sum. I reiterate that the \$30 million to \$40 million that would accrue from the collection of the 15 per cent export tax would only be equivalent to the cost to one community of a major layoff in Sault Ste. Marie, and it certainly would not be sufficient to resolve or to respond to the needs of all of northern Ontario and the need for stimulus of our economy.

We believe the fund should be established through a consolidation of the existing northern development funds and programs and with an additional earmarked percentage of the provincial revenue from the resource industry taxation in order to provide the kind of capital infusion into the northern economy that we believe is necessary. This government is not providing for this fund any of the resource revenue it collects; it appears it is simply going to use the softwood lumber export tax, which is an imposition on northern Ontario and not something that is going to help it.

We believe, though, that capital is not by itself going to resolve the problems of the north and make it more competitive in our economy. We must have diversification, and this must be based on priorities established by northerners themselves.

This government has established these northern development councils, but it has not really given them any kind of direction. They seem to be wandering in a wasteland of policy alterna-

tives, without any real options that are going to seriously respond to the problems of northern Ontario being proposed.

We must have specific community resource planning agreements between the provincial government, the local communities and the resource companies that exploit our resources to ensure there will be development of local resources that benefit local communities.

This government has never been able to bring itself to the concept of resource planning in a way that will rationalize the development and end the boom-bust cycle we have experienced in northern Ontario since the first prospector arrived in our part of the country.

In my comments earlier, I talked about the forestry problems we are facing in northern Ontario. I will not reiterate my comments regarding the softwood lumber tax, but that is not the only problem facing our forest industry. We face a long-term problem of employment in that sector because of the failure to reforest the cutover areas adequately over the last number of years.

We are going to assure the future of that industry only if we ensure there is a supply of trees. We are going to protect the jobs in that industry only if we are sure we have a concerted reforestation program that will provide short-term jobs now and a long-term future for the lumber industry and the pulp and paper industry in our part of the province. As I said, there is nothing in the throne speech that indicates a commitment on the part of the government to that kind of program.

Today and over the last few days, we have heard a lot from the official opposition about gasoline prices. I find this a little funny because we have been raising this issue many times over the years. As a matter of fact, a member of that party, the member for Algoma-Manitoulin (Mr. Lane), at one time introduced in this House a bill that would have brought about uniform gasoline pricing in northern and southern Ontario, but the Conservative government at that time stopped that bill and would not even allow a vote on it, as I recall. They have suddenly become converted again on this issue.

We do have a serious problem of differentials in price between the north and the south, and that makes northern Ontario less competitive economically in trying to develop the diversification we need.

1540

At the time of the change of government, this government agreed to institute an inquiry into the

gasoline pricing practices in this province. All we got in response to that was an in-house program by the Ministry of Energy that concluded after six months or so and told us what we already knew. We did not have to pay any consultants from southern Ontario to go around and study prices in the north to be able to tell us we have longer distances in the north, we have a smaller population, we have less competition and we pay higher prices. That was the sum total of what that so-called inquiry found.

There has been no commitment by this government to do anything about gasoline prices in northern Ontario. After that so-called study was completed, the Minister of Energy said: "Perhaps we have two options. One, we could ask the oil companies to lower the prices in northern Ontario voluntarily." I wish him luck. The other suggestion he had was that he would perhaps consider lowering the tax, which is now what the official opposition is talking about.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: How is that going to lower the price?

Mr. Wildman: The problem with that—and I agree with the Treasurer—is that lowering the tax in northern Ontario does not guarantee a lower price at the pump. We believe this government must regulate. We believe this government should follow the example of the Conservative government of Nova Scotia, which does regulate gasoline prices.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The price in Halifax is 53.3 cents a litre.

Mr. Wildman: That argument is a red herring. The fact is that prices are higher in Nova Scotia, but they have higher differentials between Cape Breton and Halifax. That is what we are talking about here; it is not the price of gasoline in all of Ontario but the differential between northern and southern Ontario.

We have to be competitive in the north. We have to help the small businesses of northern Ontario to compete, and unless we can do something about fuel prices and transportation costs, they are not going to be competitive.

We have also heard a lot of talk about transportation and highway links. In the speech from the throne, there was a promise that there was going to be funding for transportation links within the north with the rest of the province.

I agree with the comments that have been made that we in the north should not have to pay for those kinds of improved highways through higher gasoline prices. It is not compensation for higher gasoline prices to say we are going to fix up the roads in equivalent amounts to what

northerners pay over and above what southern Ontario consumers pay.

Southern Ontario's roads are paid through the tax revenue that is paid by all Ontarians. The same should be true for the north. This government should be improving the transportation links in northern Ontario and lowering gasoline prices. It is not a choice of one or the other.

In my view, this government should approach the federal government to negotiate an agreement similar to the agreements in other provinces, such as Quebec and the Atlantic provinces, to provide for federal involvement in the four-laning of the Trans-Canada Highway. I think it is about time that the provincial government recognized this is a road of national importance and it is deteriorating. I think that is one proposal that should be followed.

Finally, with regard to health care, the speech from the throne said there will be bursaries. That is a good thing to help bring therapists to the north, but it is not going to bring doctors or specialists to northern Ontario. This government must bite the bullet and establish a teaching hospital in the north that will attract specialists and keep them in the north. It is about time we stopped having studies and actually did something about health care in northern Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I want to assure the members of the House of the concern of the Treasurer and of all members of the Liberal Party in the matters that are under discussion this afternoon. I have already indicated that they could have been debated under the regular order of business. I am not going to go over that argument again. We lost it. But I do want to indicate that while our numbers on this side are a little thin, they are not as embarrassingly thin as they are on the official opposition side, where even the mover of the motion is no longer in his seat, with only two lone, sad Tories in that broad expanse of empty blue seats on a matter they consider of such major importance.

My colleague the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) is in Thunder Bay right now, announcing the revamping of Old Fort William and making it accessible to the disabled. He is also addressing a chamber of commerce and opening a trade show.

My colleague the Minister of Natural Resources is in Dryden touring the critical forest fire areas. He is announcing a northern advisory committee on Ontario Hydro, something that was proposed by the New Democratic Party—I knew there was some reason to have the democratic socialists in politics—and he is

opening two small hydro projects in Thunder Bay and Dryden.

The parliamentary assistant, the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay), is in Kirkland Lake and Kapuskasing doing what he does best. Our colleague the member for Cochrane North is also in Kapuskasing meeting with the company and the union of Spruce Falls Power and Paper.

Sometimes it is a bit of a source of merriment in this House when we talk about our whole northern caucus, but my colleagues the member for Timiskaming and the member for Cochrane North, being a mighty band of two, have worked tremendously to see that the message from the government is properly put before the people of the north, and I believe they have been very successful in that regard.

I know the member for Nipissing, who unfortunately has been briefly taken away from the debate, does not want me to talk about the movement of the ministries to the north. If I were going to do that, I would have pointed out to him that the Ministry of Correctional Services is moving its head office to North Bay, with 325 positions.

The Ontario Lottery Corp., the Ministry of Natural Resources forestry resources group and the establishment of a forensic lab will be moving to Sault Ste. Marie, with 360 positions.

The head office of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, the Ontario Geological Survey and the mining health and safety branch of the Ministry of Labour moves to Sudbury, with 290 jobs.

The Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations and the registrar general branch of that ministry and the Ministry of Colleges and Universities student award branch moves to Thunder Bay, with 230 jobs.

I would not for a moment say that is going to solve the economic problems of the north, but the northerners I know and the ones who write to me as Treasurer, say this is the most effective and useful initiative taken by a government in 46 years.

As a matter of fact, I can recall the days when I was a northerner myself and the first time I drove to my new job in Sault Ste. Marie, when the Tory government was already seven long years in office. Highway 17 was a gravel road, and they had had many opportunities to improve the north, let alone four-lane it.

Many references have already been made in this debate to what might be in the budget. It is interesting that these matters are ready for me to present to the Legislature. I would dearly love it

if I could already have had an opportunity to put the budget before the House so the members would have a chance to tell me, instead of this singsong litany of complaint, the fact that we are able to come forward with the money to back up the commitments in the speech from the throne in a way that even they, as northerners, will not be able to criticize.

I predict right now, without any doubt whatsoever, that if that budget were presented now and we were voting on it this afternoon, every single member of the NDP would stand up in support of it.

Mr. McClellan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: At no time did the Treasurer propose to do his budget prior to May 14. Today is May 7. We were supposed to come back April 21. They are the ones responsible for the fact that the budget has not been presented, not the opposition.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member is correct except for this: It was May 13. Also, the section on northern Ontario, being so important, has been ready to be presented to the world and the northerners for yea these many days.

Mr. McClellan: Why did they not come back earlier and give us a budget?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is too bad the House leader of the NDP is protesting unduly.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. That is not an appropriate point of order. The member for Cochrane South.

Mr. McClellan: He is on a point of order.

Mr. Pope: No. I am just speaking.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is my time that is clicking off.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Was the Treasurer not through?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: No.

The Deputy Speaker: Carry on, please.

1550

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Actually, the House leader of the New Democratic Party has accomplished his aim, which he always does very successfully, of interrupting my train of thought.

As well as the movement of good, solid, high-paying government jobs to the north that are going to be available to northerners—

Mr. Pope: No, they are not.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Oh yes, they are.

Mr. Pope: No, they are not.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We will see about that. We will see whose commitment is correct in this connection.

We have also established a \$20-million program to establish northern Ontario distance education. The Ministry of Energy has committed \$6 million for wood energy programs. The Ministry of Natural Resources has a program with the north that is on a funding-phased basis over a number of years: \$3 million extra in 1986, \$4 million extra in 1987, \$5 million extra in 1988 and \$6 million extra in 1989, actually adding up to \$18 million in support of its initiatives.

The Ministry of Government Services has committed \$6.1 million for a wide variety of new initiatives, without counting the money that is going to be spent on the new offices to accommodate the committed northerners who will be working on behalf of the public service when this program is in place. It is going forward. As a matter of fact, in that connection, the members will be interested to know that I understand northern architects have already been retained after an extensive competition for designing these buildings and we will look forward to the efficacy of their usefulness. As a matter of fact, I would not be a bit surprised if somebody in the Timmins area had retained the member from Timmins as his lawyer since he must do something up there in all the days he spends in his law practice. He probably represents a whole bunch of architects.

Anyway, I want to list—

Mr. Pope: Who got the contract and what party was he formerly a candidate for?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: When you go to the north, I find that everybody is a Liberal now with very few minor exceptions and they are all sitting down here bellyaching.

This list is so long. I do not find it as entrancing as I did when it was handed to me, but as Treasurer I will tell the members that every one of these items costs money and is put forward only after the most careful thought and planning for the benefit of the northern communities. The one thing I regret is that when I travel to Ear Falls and places I know well, Schreiber where some of my best friends live—

Mr. Pouliot: That is not what they tell me.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If they speak differently—

Mr. Martel: Name one.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Jack Stokes. I have already given him a job.

There is a feeling and understanding that with the initiatives taken by this new government under the leadership of the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson) and with our whole co-operating northern caucus, we have been in a

position to show the people of the north that we are not only interested in them politically, which I suspect is a charge that might be levelled at other members of the House—if members want me to name names, I already have today—but they also understand that this new government, which is open, which consults and which decides and commits public funds not for political gain but for the good of the community, is one that has taken admirable initiatives. We are not interested in the politics of this matter. We want to do the right thing and we submit that is just what we are doing.

Mr. Pope: I am pleased to participate in this debate, and first, to reply to the Treasurer, Deputy Premier and spokesman for the Liberal Party who thinks that the loss of jobs in northern Ontario is not only not an emergency but also is not important. If he has such great measures for northern Ontario in his budget that he is so anxious to introduce, why does he not do what every other minister in that government does, leak it to the *Toronto Star* ahead of time so it can be published? Everyone else does it. Why does he not join the crowd?

It is rather interesting that the Treasurer thinks that the 1,300 people who came out to the Progressive Conservative association breakfast in Cochrane South some four weeks ago were all Liberals. I am glad he has that rose-coloured perspective on things.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: They will have a chance to be put to the test.

Mr. Pope: Yes, we will have a chance. I welcome him to come to Cochrane South because with his attitude towards northern Ontario, I would appreciate that kind of help in my campaign.

My friend, there is more to running this province than he and the Premier going on their imperial tours holding \$200-a-person wine and cheese parties. There is more to running this province than losing 20 pounds, trading in one's glasses for contact lenses, putting some grey in one's hair and wearing a red tie. There is more to running this province than sitting back and smirking and smiling and being a nice guy in the Legislature and with the press gallery.

As the government of all of this province, the government has an obligation that it has shirked, and laughingly shirked for the last year and a half, when it comes to northern Ontario.

I will tell members what the Treasurer of Ontario and spokesman for the Liberal Party does not think is important. He does not think it is important that 219 people are losing their jobs in

Kapuskasing; 219 families with no money coming in. He does not worry about the consequences on the municipality of Kapuskasing. The Treasurer does not think it is important that virtually every contractor and bush worker in Hornepayne is out of work today because of the incompetence of this government and its failure to help northern Ontario residents.

The Treasurer of Ontario and spokesman for the Liberal Party does not care that Nakina is virtually shut down because of the incompetence and lackadaisical attitude of the Liberal government. He does not care that there is widespread unemployment in the small communities around Sault Ste. Marie, with bush workers and mill workers in the lumber industry out of work because of the government's incompetence and its lackadaisical attitude. He does not care that steelworkers are out of work in Sault Ste. Marie. It is not important; it is not an emergency; it is a laughing matter.

The Treasurer of Ontario and the spokesman for the Liberal Party does not care that jobs are being lost on an ongoing basis in Sudbury; he does not care that jobs are being lost in Iroquois Falls; he does not care that jobs are being lost at Camp Forty One near Smooth Rock Falls in the riding of Cochrane North; he does not care that jobs are being lost in Terrace Bay; he does not care that there have been four layoffs in Thunder Bay. That is not an emergency to him.

It may be important to the workers and their families, but sitting down here in Toronto with exclusive French wines, none of that is important to the Liberal government of this province. Sitting there with a red tie and attending the official openings are important to the Liberals of this province. The rhetoric is to take credit for projects that have been initiated by others. That is what is important to the Liberals of this province—the token gestures, the imperial tours.

Mr. Speaker: Point of order, the member for Windsor-Riverside.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I would think that with an emergency debate—and the Conservatives called the emergency debate—we should have a quorum. There should be more than three Tories present.

Mr. Speaker ordered the bells rung.

16:00

Mr. Pope: When the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) is in Thunder Bay, I hope he will take time, when he has finished his exclusive reception at so many hundred dollars a person, to meet with the families and the individual workers who are unemployed, and

explain to them why he does not think their situation is an emergency or important. When the Minister of Natural Resources, who fouled up the softwood lumber issue so badly at the expense of jobs in northern Ontario, is in Dryden, I hope he can meet with the bush workers and the mill workers who have been laid off because of his mishandling of the softwood lumber issue.

When the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines is in Kirkland Lake and Kapuskasing, I hope he will take time to meet with the unemployed workers and explain to them that the Treasurer and spokesman for the Liberal Party of Ontario, does not think their situation is an emergency; it is a laughing matter. When the member for Cochrane North is in his own riding, I hope he will meet with the 219 workers at Spruce Falls and Kapuskasing, and explain to them that the Treasurer of this province, and spokesman for the Liberal Party does not think their situation is an emergency, and it is not important to them. I hope he will say the same thing to the workers at Camp Forty One, just south of Smooth Rock Falls, who lost their jobs and who did not even get severance pay under this government. I hope he will explain to them that losing their jobs is not an emergency and it is not important to the government, because that is precisely the message the spokesman for the Ontario Liberal Party has given here in the Legislature this afternoon.

Yes, it is the message. I want to talk about this government's response to the situation. It has been more than a year since we asked a series of questions of the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) about what policies and programs he had in place, and his government had in place, to employ the laid-off workers. Can he explain to me what specific programs he has in place for the laid-off steelworker in Sault Ste. Marie? Who will get first crack at the 360 jobs that are being established in Sault Ste. Marie by the movement of the Ontario Lottery Corp. and the part of the Ministry of Natural Resources? Please explain it now, because it has not been done in the nine months since he made the announcement.

If the minister can explain to me that the laid-off workers, the miners at Inco and Falconbridge, are going to get first crack at the 290 jobs with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, when it is established there, please do it because he has not said that yet. If he can explain to me how the laid-off mill workers in Thunder Bay are going to get first crack at the 230 jobs at the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial

Relations office to be established in that city, please explain it, because he has not said it yet.

Almost a year ago now we asked what plans the minister had to help the laid-off resource workers in these northern Ontario communities. We have yet to hear from him. We have heard lots of chuckles, had lots of smiles behind the hand, lots of red ties flashing around, but after a year, he has yet to name a single program that is putting these laid-off people to work. I have raised it almost every other day in the fall session and every day in the spring session but he has yet to show the members of the Legislature and myself how many of those laid-off resource workers have new jobs because of the efforts of this government. The answer is none. The answer is he does not have a program.

Sections 38 and 39 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, short-term funding for jobs in northern Ontario: The government has reduced that funding to its lowest level since it was started. It has not been increased at all. The Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson), the so-called champion for the north, admitted in his ministry's estimates that for sections 38 and 39 the total number of positions filled for the short-term employment project, for all of the laid-off workers in northern Ontario, numbering over 5,000, was 28—from the Premier of this province, the Minister of Northern Development and Mines, the so-called champion of the north.

Sections 38 and 39, funding for short-term employment assistance. Six thousand were hired in 1983 and 1984. This minister is satisfied with 28 at a time when layoffs have increased by 250 per cent in northwestern Ontario and 48 per cent in northeastern Ontario. He sits there so self-righteous and satisfied. He thinks he is doing a good job—28 positions compared to 6,000.

The Treasurer, the spokesman for the Liberal Party, tries to pretend that this problem has existed for 44 years. We have fewer short-term and long-term programs now for employment and diversification in northern Ontario than we have ever had. We have a higher unemployment rate in northeastern and northwestern Ontario than we have ever had.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Your time has expired.

Mr. Pope: We have had the greatest acceleration of unemployment and layoffs that we have ever had, and these fellows do not think it is an emergency.

Mr. Martel: I guess I have been around here too long. When I read the motion for the

emergency debate, I went to my office, because I knew I had raised a question about gasoline a number of times. I want to take members back to the very first time, I think it was in 1968.

I said to the minister then is the government considering discussions with the oil companies in an effort to overcome the more than five-cents-a-gallon differential being paid for gasoline by residents of northern Ontario, as compared to residents of southern Ontario?

"Second, can the minister advise the members as to the cost of transportation....?"

"Third, why is there such a disparity in the cost of gasoline between the north and south?"

Old Les Rowntree got up and said, "Mr. Speaker, the officials of my department are, at present, evaluating data on this matter."

Does that not sound vaguely familiar? "We are examining it." I have heard the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) tell me that a couple of times. This was in 1968, I remind members.

Rowntree goes on, "I am advised the geographical differences in price are unavoidable and exist in various regions of the province, including Metropolitan Toronto. With respect to the north, I understand that the differential has to do with the cost of freight, dealer's markup, and certain additional costs of handling."

I waited till last year, then asked the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations the same question and got virtually the same answer.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: What was the price then?

Mr. Martel: It was five cents a gallon difference then. If one translates that into litres, it has now become five cents a litre difference. I want to know why we have allowed the price of gas to increase with the differential between litres—and it is 4.2 or 4.4 litres per gallon; it was formerly five cents per gallon, now five cents per litre. Has the cost of production of gasoline gone up that much in the past 18 years? Why, certainly, it has not, and we get ripped off in the north.

Interestingly enough, there has not been a government and there is not a government with the courage to take on the oil industry. It is as simple as that. The Liberals do not have the courage. The Tories did not either. While there is a lot of fanfare coming out of Tory members now, two years after they lost power, they were there for 42 years and would not change a thing. They were no more courageous than is the Liberal Party of Ontario in taking on the gas industry. They will bow, scrape, genuflect, do anything they can, wear the knees of their pants

out humbling themselves in front of them, but they will not have the courage to say enough is enough. When they were in government, they could equalize the price of beer, but they have never been able to equalize the price of gasoline.

Let me tell members what Les Rowntree said with respect to the price of transportation per gallon. Let me tell the members what the differential is. He tells me that the differential is about a cent a gallon to transport the gas to northern Ontario. We should just think of the ripoff over all these years, particularly since we have converted to litres. The ripoff has been unimaginable. We tinker around with the provincial sales tax when we are not even prepared to deal with what these beggars are charging us in northern Ontario.

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Part of the accord called for this. The government has had a phoney little House inquiry with a little group travelling around the north, giving people two day's notice that it was coming, and we have a report that is really nonexistent. This government is no different.

I will give another example of why this government is no different. In 1977, when we created the Ministry of Northern Affairs, I moved a motion calling for a tomorrow fund or a heritage fund. Members can call it whatever they want. I moved a motion in this House to establish that. Both those beggars voted against it.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: And it is time that you—

Mr. Martel: Time, yes. We have been shafted for 10 more years and it still is not in place. They both voted against it.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: It is coming.

Mr. Martel: Oh, it is coming. My God, if we get rid of enough people in the north, we will reach a point where we do not have a job shortage. All we have to do is to move all of them south. We said then what the government had to do. It was not prepared to do it then, and 10 years later, that is coming.

I will give the members another example. The Progressive Conservatives closed Burwash Correctional Centre. I am trying to get the government to open it. I tried to get the Tories to open it. It is sitting there, a brand-new 42-bed unit with gymnasium and single quarters. This government has moved the ministry to North Bay, 80 miles away but it will not reopen Burwash. For \$14 million, the minister could create in Sudbury 200 new jobs for people who are now unemployed, men between the ages of 25 and 44 with families. The headquarters is 80 miles away. It is

going to cost the government more than that to build a new provincial building in Sudbury. This government will bring 290 jobs north and will not create one new job for the unemployed.

For two years I have begged this government to take upon itself to reopen that institution. There is a deputy minister who is the phoniest character when dealing with Burwash because he opposed it, and that is whose advice was sought. A couple of prisons in southern Ontario are being expanded. If this government wants to create 225 new jobs, the minister knows full well it costs—how much does it cost per job to create a new job in industry? Is it \$100,000 or \$125,000, in that neighbourhood? Because all the facilities are there, the only thing this government needs to spend is the money to make a new prison block. For \$14 million, we could have 200 to 225 new jobs and all the spinoff that would have.

I cannot get through to the members of this government, try as I might. I have talked until I am blue in the face. If this government wants to talk about new jobs, there is the chance. The facilities are there. We need to make a prison block and that would be it, and the headquarters is 80 miles away. The citizens' group in Sudbury said, "Give us the material and let us do something with it," but the government will not do that either. It brags about relocating. We are not going to knock the jobs that are coming but they are not going to reduce unemployment. Does the government not understand that? It is nice to go around and beat your breast, but there are 8,000 to 10,000 people in Sudbury who are unemployed. We need new jobs.

It can change the Mining Act—the Tories would not—and make sure that all the processing of raw material goes on in the north, not off in Wales or Norway but in the Sudbury basin. It will not do that either.

The thing that most depressed me was to hear the Premier say that northerners have to pull themselves up by their bootstraps, yet in the auto industry down here, how many grants has he given? He is not prepared to make the same monetary commitment to new development in the north. He says, "You have to pull yourselves up by your bootstraps." It is really unfair to have the Premier, as he did last year in Longlac and those parts of the world, say, "Pull yourselves up by your bootstraps," and then commit money to the auto industry in the south.

What is wrong with the government? We thought we were putting it there to get rid of these beggars and that it might listen. It does not listen any better. The government members come north

and say, "We are not going to put in any money." We need the commitment for money if the north is ever to have a chance.

Mr. Epp: I am pleased to be able to give a northern perspective on this matter, coming from the great riding of Waterloo North. It is something I wish the southerners would learn to appreciate. Seriously, although I do not live in the north I do appreciate the problems they have in the north. That is why I would like to take this opportunity to speak in this emergency debate today.

I am particularly sensitive to the fact that there are very few people of the official opposition, which brought about this debate, here. It is unfortunate that has occurred. I am sure it will be corrected some time in the future but it does not help us in this instance.

The other particular concern I want to mention is that although the official opposition over the period of two speakers has been dumping on the government for not doing enough, and although its members had the opportunity to do something over a period of a number of years, in the 25 minutes they have had today to address this debate they never at one instance or in one single sentence provided us with one constructive suggestion whereby—

Mr. Pope: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: That is factually incorrect. I told them to put money back into sections 38 and 39 and not have just 28 positions.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order.

Mr. Epp: Rather than for the Legislature and the members thereof to go away from here with a half dozen or more positive suggestions as to what could be done and what is being done, we have a number of criticisms. Maybe some of these criticisms are somewhat applicable, but certainly from a number of intelligent people one would expect more input in that regard.

The government has been addressing the unemployment situation in northern Ontario in significant ways. We recognize the drive towards competitiveness for northern Ontario investment in technology that must be matched with an investment in human capital. To this end, Ontario's Training Strategy will have a significant impact on this region of the province.

Five Ontario skills development offices have been opened in the north to provide training consulting services to employees. In addition, some \$8 million in training incentives will be made annually to northern firms. In this fiscal year, the Ministry of Skills Development has allocated \$34 million to support the Futures

program in northern Ontario through on-the-job training and work experience. This program will assist some 10,000 young northerners who are encountering serious unemployment problems. There are 34 Futures offices in the north with more to come.

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Unlike the previous government, this government has moved expeditiously and responsibly towards providing equitable health care for northern Ontario. Let me just mention a few of these. The government has established northern health travel grants to provide financial assistance for northerners who must travel more than 300 kilometres—

Mr. Wildman: Thanks to the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds).

Mr. Epp: We recognized the need and once we had the opportunity we dealt with it. I am glad the official opposition and the third party recognize that. More than 300 kilometres one way from their place—

Mr. McClellan: It was in the accord. They had to do it. They had no choice.

Mr. Epp: We more than readily agreed to that in the accord. There was no problem with that, as the member knows.

The Acting Speaker: Please address your remarks to the chair.

Mr. Epp: It was in the accord because his party and our party were more than anxious to include it and to provide specialized medical treatment. That is why this program was initiated. The cost is expected to be just over \$13 million per year.

Another important health care initiative is the medical specialist incentive program that provides financial incentives of up to \$40,000 over four years to help specialists set up a practice in northern Ontario. Together with additional assistance in the form of capital and operating funds to help equip facilities and incentives to establish outreach programs, the medical specialist incentive program is expected to cost about \$6.7 million over the period of four years.

An additional \$2.5 million has been approved for prenatal services that serve high-risk pregnant women and high-risk infants at four northern hospitals.

For senior citizens in the north, the EldCap program has been extended, providing additional funds for 12 projects involving the addition of extended health care facilities to small hospitals and the upgrading of existing facilities.

This government has moved responsibly in addressing the challenges and to maintain northern Ontario's unique strength in as cost-efficient, effective and thus competitive a manner as possible. However, the minister for resignations will appreciate this—

Hon. Mr. Ruprecht: What?

Mr. Epp: The minister for resignations. I mentioned this the other day, but I must explain it. He is known as the minister of resignations because only a few years ago when he was here, every time he got up to ask a question, he asked everybody to resign.

However, the process of effective long-term change for northern Ontario will not be realized overnight. I want to quote from the person known as the emperor of the north, a person all of us hold in high esteem, the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) who indicated his resignation to the House a few days ago. I want to quote from what he said on Dateline Ontario, referring to northern Ontario and the change and the jobs: "It ain't going to happen overnight. It is a difficult problem. It is one that many of the other provinces are dealing with also. Regional disparities are difficult to overcome. There are no easy answers. It is a long-term solution."

That is what the member who is known as the emperor of the north indicated, and it is not a one-time solution. It is something this government is addressing on a long-term basis, one we have taken substantial and solid steps to address. The members of the official opposition, although they are shaking their heads otherwise, know this is the truth. That is where they are feeling their hurt. They know it is the truth and they are feeling hurt.

The previous government's ad hoc approach in the north was a failure. That is why the problems exist. Its ad hoc approach to those problems that it tried to address over 42 years was a failure. Those problems did not develop over the past two years; they have been there for ages and ages. Now they know that somebody who is responsible and in charge is going to address the problems, and that is why they want to be helpful. I appreciate their helpfulness. They can go ahead and be helpful.

The Conservative approach was to throw money where there was expansion such as the Hemlo gold fields, or where there was a depletion of the market for resources such as Atikokan. This did nothing to change the cycle of boom and bust. We continued to have the cycle of boom and bust.

This government has addressed the issue with a more realistic approach. Just ask Esther Wellesley, the director of the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre in Timmins, who recently stated: "For the first time, the ministers and the MPPs are going up north, and that never happened before. This provincial government is showing more interest."

Mr. Gordon: We have just listened to the member opposite rewriting history. He told us a little while ago in so many words that it really was the Liberals over there who wrote the accord and that the New Democratic Party really had nothing to do with it; they just happened to be along for the ride. I guess this is what they are going to be telling the people in the next election. I am sure the New Democrats are glad to hear that. It must really warm their hearts.

I notice that the Treasurer, who made quite a to-do about the fact that some of our members were not in the House at the same time he was, has now departed. I am sure he has gone to the same reception as our members. There is a reception going on down in committee room 2, where humanitarian awards are being given out. I am sure the kinds of allusions he made are not the kinds I would make. I would say he is probably at that reception, as were our members.

I am not going to get down in that political gutter with the Treasurer, nor would I accuse him of getting into a political gutter, but I do want to talk a little this afternoon about something that transpired the other day. While it was painful to me, it certainly was an insult to the people of northern Ontario.

The Liberal government here, the Liberal caucus as a matter of fact—no doubt, Mr. Speaker, you were in the caucus room at the time, which does not take away from your impartiality now, but it makes me wonder how impartial you were there—refused to allow a debate on my motion that would see gasoline tax and gasoline prices equalized between northern and southern Ontario. This is one of the first times in all the years I have been here, and I have been here now since 1981, that I have heard that a member bringing a resolution to this House to deal with an issue as important as this was turned down by the government side of the House.

It speaks well for the New Democrats. They see this as an issue in northern Ontario. Their members go across their ridings and listen to their people, as do we, and they know this particular issue is one that stands uppermost in many people's minds.

I want to tell the members why it is uppermost in people's minds today. It is because we went through those years in the late 1970s and 1980s when gasoline prices went through the ceiling. As gasoline prices went up, so did the cost to the ordinary consumer in our northern communities. It has got to the point now where northerners are paying too much for gasoline. Northerners are getting ripped off at the pumps and these people refuse even to debate it in this House.

One of the reasons they are here today in this emergency debate is that they were not willing to talk about northern issues. They were not listening and were not willing to listen to the people of the north. Today, they are going to have to listen to the people of the north.

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As a matter of fact, I want to put on the record what some of the smaller municipalities in northern Ontario have written to me in letters. Their plaint, their cry for help is something that goes right to the heart of this issue. I would like to read into the record some of the things that have been said by northern municipalities.

Let us take the corporation of the township of McDougall, which is just outside Parry Sound. Did I not hear the Treasurer talk about how the Minister of Tourism and Recreation had gone to northwestern Ontario to announce some new tourism venture on the part of the Liberal government? Did I not hear that a few minutes ago? I think I did hear that. Let us hear what the problem is. This is what they say in McDougall township:

"We as northerners find it very disturbing to travel to the southern parts of our province and discover gasoline prices considerably below the price we are expected to pay in the Parry Sound area. Equally upsetting is the reaction of tourists to our area who complain bitterly about the price difference and suggest they may not be back in future years."

In a small municipality in northern Ontario these councillors recognize that the price of gas can be either a deterrent to future tourism or a positive measure.

Let me read another letter, another note from people in northern Ontario. This is from the village of Magnetawan. They say:

"Your government has identified the tourist industry as playing a critical role in the economy of the north and yet the price of gasoline is enough to frighten off potential vacationers. What we need are incentives to attract people, industries and jobs to the north and not deterrents."

This comes from the people of northern Ontario. These are the people this government refused to hear from yesterday when it blocked the motion to allow a debate in this House on equalizing gasoline prices between northern and southern Ontario. These are the people it refused to hear from. I want to put their views on the record right now. These people live with this problem day after day.

Here is another one, from the township of Evanturel, from Englehart. I will just read a portion:

"Many of our area residents are farmers who rely heavily on diesel fuel. They are already struggling because of low commodity prices, with no foreseeable increase in the near future. Even a small reduction in fuel price can help make northern industry more viable in an ever-competitive market."

Surely these people can see by now that this is an issue that reaches into the heart of every northerner. I recall quite well a letter that came to me from the municipality of Chapleau, which is in the riding represented by the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren). I am sure that he too, if he were to rise today to talk about this issue, would tell them. They told me that in their municipality they are paying as much as 50 cents more per gallon for gasoline in Chapleau. Can one imagine that?

Where is the rhyme or reason for this? Where is the common sense in all this? Surely, if we want to have economic development in northern Ontario and if the government is serious about tourism in the north, as it keeps saying—the Treasurer was just bragging how the minister of tourism has gone up north to boost tourism—then it would equalize gasoline prices between north and south. If it is serious about putting money back into the pockets of ordinary northerners, workers, people on fixed incomes and people who do not have jobs, then it will do this. This is something that is immediate; it would give purchasing power to those people, purchasing power they do not have now.

What we have here is a tax on northerners. This government is taxing northerners to live in northern Ontario. It is taking more money from northern people, money they could very well be spending on the necessities of life. It is unfair and it is unjust. I say to this government that if it really wanted to help northerners and to take that next step in giving northerners the right to choose their own destiny and to make their own decisions, it would lower the tax on gasoline. The government will say, "That is going to cost

millions of dollars." Millions of dollars! This government is already taking more than \$1 billion in excess taxes—sales taxes, corporate taxes and personal taxes—from the citizens of this province right now, at this very moment, yet it cannot return \$71 million to those people.

If this government cannot give back that little bit of money and put it into the pockets of every man, woman and child in northern Ontario, then it cannot tell me it is serious. What I fear is that it is more serious about going after special interest groups, but that is not good enough. This government has to go after the ordinary people and give them a break and an opportunity.

I would like to talk much longer on this, but I see my time is running out. This government cannot fool the people of the north any longer. We have launched a campaign over the past three months in northern Ontario wherein all municipalities and citizens have had the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they are being ripped off. We are fed up with this ripoff, and we want those gasoline prices equalized.

Mr. Pouliot: Mr. Speaker, if it is in keeping with the orders, let me begin by commending you. Having served on the standing committee on the Ombudsman for a number of years, I know how difficult it is for you, being an educated person, to listen to the kind of verbiage and the kind of diatribes and half-truths that not only you and the members of the House but, more important, of course, the people of the north as well have been subjected to.

It was not too long ago, a few days back, when our patience was taxed during 49 long, endless pages under the auspices of the speech from the throne. For us northern members, it became very clear that the government of Ontario does not understand the north, does not know what to do about the north and does not want to listen.

I represent the largest riding in the province of Ontario.

Mr. Laughren: How big is it?

Mr. Pouliot: I thank the member for Nickel Belt: fully 28 per cent of the overall land mass. I live in a different world.

The Thunder Bay Times-News of last Friday, May 1, 1987—it is very timely, I remind members with respect, as we near the year 2000—reported that fully 11 per cent of the people in Lake Nipigon do not have washroom facilities. Not six or seven per cent, but 11 per cent do not have that basic, essential service. By contrast, in Markham, northeast of Toronto, 80 per cent of the people have two washrooms.

There is a parallel here. Both Markham and the riding of Lake Nipigon have a washroom problem. In Markham they have too many, and in the distant part of my riding they do not have any. When you ask government members to do something about this, they tell you it is a federal matter. This is what I will convey to Mr. Anderson, who is an elder on one of the northern reserves and who has to use those facilities when the temperature dips to 40 below zero. I will go and say, "Mr. Anderson, you do have a problem, I understand, but the people in Markham are more concerned about having the domed stadium built so that they do not get rained on."

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Mr. Pierce: You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

Mr. Pouliot: Do not worry. The year 2000 is near. I appreciate what he is saying, but it is a federal matter.

The true north has twice the provincial average for unemployment. The true north pays 50 cents a gallon on the average more for gasoline. The true north pays 15 to 20 per cent more for electricity. That is what the north is, with 90 per cent of the land mass and less than 10 per cent of the population.

Our goals in life have been to feed the south with our resources. Let them eat crumbs; this is what we have received in return, and the words are not too strong. There is no acquiescence, no political will that one day we will give the northerners the chance to be like the others.

Consultants? Oh, yes. If we see one more report up north, we will literally go up the wall. The truth is we pay more for goods and services than anywhere else in Ontario. The truth is we receive less in return than anywhere else in Ontario. The government does not have the vision. It commissions another study and then it gives us a little bit to the left, a little bit to the right. It does not have the courage to interfere and to help relieve the injustice with public funds. It tells us that the marketplace always chooses better. The truth—and we know this, we live this—is that to compete with southern Ontario, we need the government to realize that we need help and we need it now.

The Treasurer has the opportunity, an opportunity that was seldom given before to Ontario, and I am referring specifically to the next budget, to be tabled on May 20. Ontario has been the happy recipient of a recovery in its economy that started somewhere in 1982. Consequently, the Treasurer has about \$900 million of unanticipated—des revenus non-anticipés, M. le Président—

revenues. What we need, and I repeat myself, since we have been studied to death, is focus.

When the members of our caucus contemplated the change that was to take place some two years ago, I for one—and I say this with all the sincerity at my command—really believed he had the political will to do things. Timetables would be established. Specifics would be the order of the day. There would be no more studies. We would not spend taxpayers' dollars to tell us that Rossport is located on water, but we could deal specifically with measures that would enhance our lives up north and make the north a better place to live.

M. le Président, les quelques minutes qui reste à ma disposition vous permettront d'apprécier, prenant par exemple, la misère humaine. Quand je parle de misère humaine, vous savez nous n'avons pas besoin d'aller se promener sur les autres continents. Tout ce qu'on a à faire c'est de visiter avec nous. Nous pourrions le faire ensemble.

Se dériger vers les petites villes du Nord éparpillées un peu à gauche et à droite comme Longlac avec une main d'œuvre sinon démunie, réduite à cause des mises-à-pied qui se sont produites récemment, et de là à parcourir si vous voulez peut-être 34 ou 40 kilomètres pour aller à la municipalité voisine Geraldton et apercevoir le même phénomène.

On veut bien croire les données ou le programme du gouvernement actuel. Vous savez ça devient de plus en plus difficile, parce que de plus en plus et plus souvent qu'autrement on ne sait pas et qui croire.

Les mesures précises, les mesures concrètes, M. le Président, qui n'ont pas apportées hier mais espérant qui apporteront dans le futur la chances aux citoyens et citoyennes du Nord de vivre à juste titre dans la province de l'Ontario. On les veut maintenant. On ne veut pas plus que ça, mais demander moins que ça serait illogique.

L'opportunité sera donné au trésorier de l'Ontario. Elle lui sera donné précisément le 20 mai. A lui de nous dire que le Nord de l'Ontario sera la première priorité dans le budget qui suivra. Je vous remercie, M. le Président.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: It is a pleasure for me to stand in my place and participate in this emergency debate. At the outset, I would like to remind the members who were here prior to 1985 that I had the distinct pleasure of serving as our party's northern affairs critic for three years.

At that time, of course, we were the official opposition and had only one member from northern Ontario, the then member for Rainy

River, who in the latter stages of the last parliament chose to resign his seat. That led to a variety of happenings, not the least of which was an increased demand on my time in northern Ontario.

I would say that never during those three years as northern affairs critic did I attempt to pass myself off as a northerner. I did, however, attempt to listen to and visit the people of the north and bring back to this chamber and to my party what I thought were the concerns and needs of the people in the north.

Now that we have had the opportunity to form the government, I would like to submit that we did listen, and we have brought on stream programs that in the past were only promises from the previous government. I do not know that there is a whole lot to be gained by being critical of events of the past. Rather, I do think it is important to point out that in the various happenings of these past two years, we have attempted on an ongoing basis to be cognizant of the needs of the north.

I can say in all sincerity that in so far as my responsibility is concerned, when I am sitting around the cabinet table, when I am in our caucus and when I am representing our party in any way, I do make every attempt to include in my comments references to the north, to the native community, to the francophones and to the remote areas of Ontario. I am constantly reminding my colleagues, both old and new, that we have a responsibility to all the areas of this province and to all the people in it.

Let me bring some proof positive, I hope, to the words I have just uttered. When the Premier appointed me to the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of senior citizens, I chose to find out where the problems in the system were and began a consultative tour in northwestern Ontario. The first community I visited in this process was Thunder Bay. I met there, not just with the providers of the service but also with the users of the service and one of the local members, the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy).

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As an aside, I would point out that in every community I visited, I invited the local member to come with me, to listen and to be part of the exercise. Quite frankly, in virtually all the northern visits I made, the local members came and participated in those meetings with me.

Once the consultation tour was complete, we prepared a report to the Premier of about 150 pages, with almost the same number of recommendations. The process we went through for

each of the areas of concern the government has—that is the legislative involvement, the concerns for the social policy of the province, for the Treasury; whatever it is—was that in every piece of the discussion we included in our thoughts the implications for the north.

One of the very first things that came from that exercise, even before our white paper was released, was the announcement of the integrated homemaker program. There were six communities identified for the first phase of the integrated homemaker program; three of those six were northern communities. Some would question Parry Sound, although Parry Sound is a northern community by our definition in this Legislature. The Cochrane district was the second and Thunder Bay was the third.

Beyond that, in the next group of integrated homemaker projects that we brought on stream, there were additional communities in the north involved in that list. We have not ignored the north.

Let me go for a moment to the comments of my colleague the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp), who made reference to some of the—

Mr. Laughren: We have a parliamentary assistant here for you.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: The member for Nickel Belt would delight in putting me off track for the remaining three and a half minutes, because I am probably embarrassing some of the members opposite with the facts that I am presenting.

The member for Waterloo North made reference to some of the programs brought on through the efforts of our government and announced by my colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). What I would like to add to that is that the Minister of Health, the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and I have had the pleasure of working together as a team on the various projects that are being brought on stream to assist seniors in our community. Again, that includes northern Ontario.

Let me read into the record some of the things my colleague the Treasurer alluded to when he had his long list in front of him and determined not to get into the specifics of it.

In the last two years, as part of our program for assisting seniors, we have introduced special initiatives in 37 remote communities to bring in Meals on Wheels, friendly visiting and other home support services in outlying districts. We have brought in Alzheimer support services in

three distinct areas of the north. The home support expansion has covered nine expanded projects and 23 new projects.

I have already made reference to the integrated homemaker program. If we wanted to do so, we could get into all the detail about the 36 new acute care beds, the 176 chronic care beds, the 124 nursing home beds and the seniors housing project units, 248 of them announced in 1986 and 369 announced so far this year.

Two weeks ago, I had the pleasure of representing my colleague the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) in Thunder Bay, where we turned the sod on two new seniors projects, one a Royal Canadian Legion seniors' apartment complex and the other the Suomi-Koti project on the outskirts of Thunder Bay. Again, they are just part of the long list of initiatives that our government is taking.

Let me read into the record, too, that we have Alzheimer projects in Timmins, Thunder Bay and Sudbury. We have new meals assistance programs in Timmins, Gravenhurst, Huntsville, Red Lake, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Dryden, Blind River, Earlton and Sault Ste. Marie. We have an increase in home support services in North Caribou Lake, New Liskeard, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, the district of Rainy River, the district of Kenora, Cochrane, Big Trout Lake, North Bay and Englehart. We have respite care programs that are new in Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury and Thunder Bay.

I could go on, but I will go just to the new projects that we have on the home support services, starting with Ramore and running through Moosonee, Constance Lake Indian Reserve, etc. and ending up in Gore Bay. There is a total of 22 on that list.

I think the evidence is there that our government is concerned for and about the north. We are so concerned that we are putting that concern into action. We are prepared to and have, in fact, brought on programs that assist the north of this great province of ours.

Mr. Pierce: It is a sad day when we have to take a day of the Legislature's business to talk about the problems in northern Ontario, particularly when the province is doing so well. Of course, it is doing so well in southern and southeastern Ontario only because of programs that were initiated a number of years ago.

I am especially happy to hear the member for London North (Mr. Van Horne) acknowledge that the government on that side of the House is prepared to recognize all of Parry Sound as being part of northern Ontario. I know that my

colleague and friend on this side of the House has been working for some time towards getting Parry Sound recognized as part of northern Ontario.

I am sure that the people of Parry Sound will be exceedingly happy to hear today as this debate proceeds that they will now become part of the Ontario northern health travel grant program. They will also be able to make use of the Ministry of Education's three per cent grant for goods and services; and maybe—I say only maybe—the Minister of Natural Resources is watching TV in Dryden today and he will now know that the Ministry of Natural Resources is also responsible for things in Parry Sound as they relate to northern Ontario. I thank the member for that. If nothing else comes out of this debate today, at least we have accomplished that much.

I am also interested to hear the Treasurer today talk about the transferring of 1,200 jobs. We look at that as being a positive approach to solving some problems in northern Ontario.

There are members in this House today, some of whom have already left, and there were also members of the community, who sat on the Advisory Committee on Resource Dependent Communities in Northern Ontario. One of the recommendations that came out of that committee was that government should endeavour to relocate or move the responsibilities of government beyond the Golden Horseshoe. The recommendation was such that it said that those jobs would be new jobs and that they would not be jobs that would be taken out of one area and physically moved to another area.

I believe the government has taken that recommendation out of context, and its response, of course, has been to relocate physically 1,200 people in northern Ontario. That was never the intent of the recommendation that was put out by the single-resource community committee, sometimes called the Rosehart committee.

Mr. Ashe: How many jobs are up there now?

Mr. Pierce: Well, of course, they have not constructed the buildings and the jobs have not been relocated.

The other thing that was recommended by the single-resource communities committee and the Rosehart report was to assist in the establishment of secondary industries. There was also a strong recommendation that the Ontario government give serious consideration to removing the seven per cent Ontario sales tax on all manufactured goods for northern Ontario.

The response by the government was that that is a very expensive package and it would cost the

taxpayers of Ontario a lot of money. At the same time, when they are looking at trying to solve some problems in developing industry and encouraging industry into northern Ontario, they are not prepared to do anything that may cost some money.

1700

In remarks earlier today, there were comments made about the amount of money that has been put into the automobile industry in southern and southeastern Ontario. Nobody denies that that money is required to encourage those industries to locate in Ontario, but let us have something other than words from this government to solve some of the problems in northern Ontario as well. Let us recognize that some day, some time, we are going to have to spend some money, or at least be prepared to take less money out of the industries that are still in northern Ontario.

In many cases we talk about the high cost of gasoline and transportation. Lord only knows the members have heard enough about that today, but they have not heard enough until they are prepared to do something about it.

Not only does it cost you extra money out of your pocket when you fill up your gas tank, but also it costs you extra money out of your pocket every time you go to a grocery store, every time you go to a furniture store, every time you go to a convenience store. It costs that extra money to get those products into the north because of the high cost of transportation. It was said here earlier today that this is an extra tax on northerners. This extra tax is not only in putting gas in your car; this extra tax on fuel and gasoline is also a tax you experience in everything you do in northern Ontario.

The government talks about creating jobs, enhancing industry, doing something with cottage lots, doing something on crown lands. I have individuals with two little kids who come into my constituency office. They have an opportunity. For the last 17 years they have taken \$20,000 out of a trapper's cabin, and the Ministry of Natural Resources is saying to them today: "Either you get out of that cabin or we are going to burn it to the ground. You have stayed in the cabin two weeks beyond the trappers' season, and that is a no-no."

That is the kind of creation of jobs we are doing in northern Ontario. One ministry does not complement the other when it comes to helping out people in northern Ontario. One department within a ministry does not complement the other. In this instance, the Ministry of Natural Resources, through its game and fish branch, was giving

this guy a licence to trap and sell minnows from his trapper's cabin. The land branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources did not recognize it and did not want to do anything about it for 17 years.

Now, under the new Minister of Natural Resources, we have the administration going in and saying: "Look, guys, you have been here too long. We do not want you taking a living out of this lake any more. You are putting a stress on the fisheries industry. Get out or we will put you out." That is this government's response to helping out the people of northern Ontario.

Something members have not heard about today is the price of milk. How you equalize the price of gas, you also equalize the price of milk. Gasoline, like milk, and milk, like gasoline, are not products you can do without in northern Ontario. The only difference between the two of them is that you ride on one and you drink the other, but they are still the necessities of life to survive in northern Ontario. I think some day that government over there is going to have to recognize that those items are not the extras in life but the necessities. They are the necessities that everybody in this province has the right to have access to.

We talk about the educational system and how great we are doing in the educational system. At the same time, we talk about the high drop-out rates. When they have the drop-out rates that they indicated in their throne speech—the comparison and the figures they use—the only thing that brings that drop-out rate percentage up is the drop-out rate in northern Ontario. We can talk all we want about the skills and development and the extra training. We can train those people all we want but if there are no jobs for them, they are not going to take the training. There is no place for them to go.

Let us talk about tourism for a minute and "what a great job we are doing in promoting tourism." I am using the government's words. I can tell the members that as of today, the four-by-four wooden washrooms on the highways of northern Ontario are still blocked off by barricades because nobody should go to the washroom until May 15 when the fishing season opens. Yet there was all kinds of noise made last year about how well they were going to address the problems of travel in northern Ontario by providing great facilities along the highway.

I am afraid the members of this government have a lot to learn about northern Ontario. They are great at travelling in northern Ontario, but they should get out of their cars and their

airplanes, look around, talk to the people, accept their recommendations and act on them. They should not just listen, come back and provide all kinds of nice words about how nice it was to be in northern Ontario yesterday and say: "I have talked to the people in northern Ontario. I now know the problems and I think we can work out the solutions."

Mr. Laughren: This chamber is truly a bizarre and wonderful place. I have been here for only 15 years. There are people trying to make sure that it does not go any longer than that as well. I must say it really is a bit much to sit in my seat and listen to the arguments being made by the Progressive Conservatives. It really is a bit much.

Mr. Pierce: I have been here for only two years. I have come to help you out.

Mr. Laughren: I know the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce) has been here for only two years.

I must say that I am pleased to support the emergency debate. There should be no doubt that it is an emergency debate because anything that takes 40 years to build up to should surely be regarded as an emergency when it happens.

Neglect does not come easily, and the Tories worked at it for a lot of years. I can look back a few years and remember the member for Algoma-Manitoulin bringing into this chamber a private member's bill to equalize the price of gas across Ontario. The opposition supported him and the Tory party voted him down; the Tories, of all people.

What do members think my constituents in Chapleau thought when they read that in the newspaper? People in Chapleau pay an outrageous price. The Liberals put on a dog and pony show to go around to check on gasoline prices in the north. They went to Chapleau and they had an open hearing.

Mr. Epp: And you attended it.

Mr. Laughren: No, I did not attend the one in Chapleau. I know where I was not. There was a public hearing. I may not know where I have been part of the time, but I know where I was not. I was not in Chapleau at that public hearing. At that public hearing there was quite a good turnout of people.

Mr. Epp: How do you know if you were not there?

Mr. Laughren: I was down here doing my job. I get regular phone calls and letters from my constituents in Chapleau and I go there frequently.

I believe that the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Ministry of Energy were the ones that set up that committee. After the committee went to Chapleau, it came away expressing some dismay at the price of the gasoline there.

I am told that at that public hearing, a young man stood up and said: "There seems to be some confusion over why the price is so high, and nobody can really justify it. Why do we not boycott one of the stations and all shop at the other stations? Then that one person will have to lower the price. When he does, we will go back to him." The staff person said it would not work. End of debate. I do not know why it would not work.

Since then, the reeve of Chapleau has done a very good job of pursuing the same issue of why the prices of gasoline are so high. My colleague from Sudbury is right on. The price is 50 cents a gallon more. Why is it so high?

1710

We get two answers back. One is that the oil companies are doing it, either through the oil company or the bulk dealer, and it is not the dealers' problem.

Then the oil company—Esso in this case—wrote back and said, "You are getting the wrong figures from the dealer. It is the dealer who is making the big profit." I ask members, why can we not get some straight answers on the price of gasoline in northern Ontario?

The Tories never answered the question. The Liberals do not answer the question. The Tories had a task force one time that said it was not transportation costs. They did not know what it was, but they knew it was not transportation costs. Let us face it. It is really their precious free enterprise system that exploits the marketplace as it finds it. It is nothing more, nothing less, and as long as they want to pay homage to that system, then they are going to live with this kind of exploitation of the market.

I would be willing to accept another explanation, but I do not know what it is. Let the government tell me what it is. We are dying to know. It really is ridiculous. Every time I hear someone suggest that our tax dollars should make up the difference for northerners who pay the extra gas price, I could get a little ill. That should not come out of our taxes. It is not the taxpayers who are raising the price. It is the private sector. There is a lot of hypocrisy around here.

Before I sit down, I would like the Tories to go on record at some point, telling us what they think a free trade arrangement between Canada

and the United States would do for northern Ontario. I would like to know if the Tories believe that a free trade agreement would help northern Ontario, because there are some questions that need to be answered. If the Tories are so gung-ho on a free trade arrangement, I would like to know how they think it will help northern Ontario, because as soon as the government decides that there needs to be regional development program in northern Ontario, guess what that is going to mean? Screams of subsidy from south of the border. We have already had it.

We had very low stumpage fees in Ontario. I think they were extremely low. I may not agree with it, but I think we have the right to set those fees. What does the US government say? That is a form of subsidy. So if we decided, as a government, as a province, as a jurisdiction, that we want to have low stumpage fees in order to stimulate the forestry industry, we do not have the right to do that. If we say to Inco and Falconbridge, Falconbridge in particular, "You must process your ores in Sudbury. You can no longer ship them to Norway," does that violate a free trade agreement? It seems to me it could.

I want someone to tell me how you fit together free trade and regional development. Somebody has to tell me that, because in northern Ontario we have been staring free trade in the face for 100 years. We have had free trade in resources, and do members know what we get? Maximum exploitation of those resources; that I admit. But do you get a diversified economy? Does it allow for government intervention to right some of the historic wrongs in northern Ontario?

Au contraire: it means that anything a government does that uses tax money to prop up the economy of the north or to try to diversify the economy of the north, make it stronger, can be regarded as a subsidy by our trading partner; in this case, the US.

I never hear the Tories talking about that in northern Ontario. They talk about it down here. They talk about it in Ottawa. They talk about it out west. I never hear them talking about the free trade issue in northern Ontario.

Mr. McFadden: I did in Thunder Bay, two months ago; you should have been there.

Mr. Laughren: I did not hear the member. Was he supporting it? That is the question. Was the member for Eglinton supporting free trade in Thunder Bay?

Mr. McFadden: Absolutely, and the audience agreed.

Mr. Laughren: I see. He must have been talking to Mr. Carter of Great Lakes Forest Products.

Mr. McFadden: There were 300 people in the room.

Mr. Laughren: I see.

If we try to develop northern Ontario through a form of government subsidy, we are going to get our hide nailed to the barn door by our free-trading partner. Simply, we could not pull it off.

I suggest that while the emergency debate moved by the Tories today is appropriate—the problem is serious in northern Ontario—I would be much happier if I had seen a little history that indicated that the Tories really did have a firm commitment to righting the wrongs of northern Ontario. That is not the history of this place. We all remember—or most of us do; maybe the new Tories do not remember but the rest of us certainly do. I would prefer to see a debate that centred on why the Tories did not do more than they did when they had the opportunity.

In conclusion, I am concerned about the gasoline prices in northern Ontario. I see no reason they could not be equalized across the province. Since there are about eight million people in southern Ontario and three quarters of a million in northern Ontario, how much difference would they need to alter the price down here to enable equalized prices across the entire province?

I think it would not make very much difference to the price of gasoline in southern Ontario if it was lowered in the north and had the southern price compensate for that difference in northern Ontario. I do not think the government would get complaints from people in southern Ontario either. Despite the efforts of some people to create differences between the north and the south, as long as things are being done fairly they will not get objections from the north and they will not get objections from the south.

Mr. Mancini: I join my colleagues to take part in this emergency debate. First of all, I want to say I am somewhat disappointed the Conservative Party chose to take a day out of the regular, normal proceedings of the Legislature to put forward this motion for an emergency debate. As was amply pointed out by the Treasurer, we are now in the middle of our replies to the speech from the throne.

Mr. McClellan: There was nothing there.

Mr. Gillies: How do we reply to it? There is nothing there.

Mr. Mancini: Then I say to my honourable friend across the floor, if he had any complaints about the speech from the throne, he could have

spent the better part of this afternoon talking about just that. He could have had plenty of time, and my Conservative colleagues could have done the same thing.

This can only be viewed as something not more significant than some type of last gasp, political, desperate manoeuvre by the Conservative Party before something important happens, and I am not sure when that important event is going to take place.

I want to say that on one point I do agree with my colleague the member for Nickel Belt. I agree it is somewhat tiring to listen to the Conservative members of parliament stand in the Legislature and bemoan the problems that face northern Ontario, and the crocodile tears just flow. Half of that side of the Legislature is covered with crocodile tears. A party that spent more than four decades in office—count them, more than four decades in office. Those people spent more time in office than Moses spent in the desert. They had every opportunity.

Interjection.

Mr. Mancini: It stings, does it not? It stings when their record can be brought up and shown to them and it hurts to look at it.

Mr. Gillies: Your record in northern Ontario is nonexistent, except for the plane tickets of the member for Cochrane North.

Mr. Mancini: I know we have struck a tender nerve. I know the record of the Conservative Party has been pretty woefully weak as far as northern Ontario is concerned. I know they do not like it brought up, but for a political party that has spent four decades in office to call an emergency debate on issues they had an opportunity to correct if they felt so at the time, if they felt that strongly about it; to interrupt the general proceedings of the House when they had every basic opportunity to take part in these same speeches, they could have given the same speeches in their reply to the speech from the throne, every single one of them could have given the same speech—but no, they want to disrupt the Legislature. They have already.

You know, there is something I cannot understand.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Mancini: Mr. Speaker, the noise does not bother me.

1720

The Deputy Speaker: It does bother me. Would the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) and the member for Nickel Belt please

either take their seats or remove themselves. The noise is rather deafening.

Mr. Mancini: I cannot remember a time when a party in opposition prevented a Treasurer from introducing a budget. I cannot remember a time when an opposition party postponed—

Mr. Sterling: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Could you clarify the standing orders and indicate to me how many times in a year an opposition party can bring forward a motion for an emergency debate? Is it not true that you can bring forward five motions for emergency debates at your particular want or request? Is that not the case?

The Deputy Speaker: There is no limit upon emergency debates as long as they are not on the same subject.

Mr. Mancini: I would have thought that a person who served as a minister of the crown would have known the answer to a simple question such as that.

Mr. Speaker, in all your generosity, will you give me back the 45 seconds that were taken away from me by the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling)?

It is hard to believe how sensitive that party is. As my colleague the Treasurer said earlier, he and some of us were in that party's position not so long ago. He said they were difficult times, and they were difficult times. I am sure that the cold hand that those members feel on their hearts at this time is something that some of us felt a number of years ago.

I cannot recall an opposition party delaying a budget of a government. The Conservative Party participated in delaying the introduction of the Ontario budget, the economic blueprint for our province for the next 12 months. Its members come to the Legislature and decry the problems in the north. They force the official proceedings to be backed up and, at the same time, they prevent the Treasurer from introducing his budget.

To me that is somewhat hypocritical. They want the government to take action in its budgetary matters. Every single member of the Conservative Party who spoke today said, "We have to have more money for northern Ontario." They are the same Conservative members of parliament who are delaying the announcement of the budget where we would be able to hear whether there would be more money for northern Ontario. The crocodile tears that flowed this afternoon have not helped the opposition's political fortunes one iota.

As a matter of fact, they are seen for exactly what they are; a cheap, political move obstructing the Legislature, delaying the regular procedures and almost forcing the government to call an election. That is what that party is almost doing.

I do not want to minimize in any way the problems that are facing northern Ontario residents. I have great confidence in the ministers of the Ontario government, under the leadership of the Premier, that this government will and has been able to produce a record much more significant than the previous government that sits across the floor. I have great confidence, even though we have been in office only 24 short months, that when the writ is issued and the Liberal candidates and the Liberal members of parliament seeking re-election travel the north, they will be warmly received. I have much more confidence in that than I do in what will be happening across the way.

One of the reasons their policies were such a failure in the north is that they tried to build an empire around a certain individual. Like the Shah of Iran, who indulged himself to such an extent that he was forced to flee from his gold toilet seat, the same thing is happening to our friends across the way. The people of the north realize the indulgence, the vulgar opulence, with which the Conservative Party surrounded itself, and these things will come to account in a very short time.

I say again that this party across the way could have given exactly the same speeches we heard today under the normal, regular proceedings of the House. As a matter of fact, is it not sad that we have an emergency debate, and we do not even have a vote on it? Shame on the Conservative members of the Legislature for disrupting the normal procedures of the House.

Mr. Lane: I am sure a number of my colleagues will be surprised to see me entering into the debate this afternoon, because I have not often attempted to speak in this House of late. There are two reasons for that. In the 1981 and 1985 elections, we were able to elect young, able speakers from northern Ontario who liked to speak and could speak much better than I. I enjoyed listening to them rather than trying to speak on my own behalf. Also, a couple of years ago, one of my vocal chords decided to quit working, and the doctor says it is not going to work any more. On occasion, when I am trying to speak, I get cut off in the middle of a word and I cannot carry on. It is a bit embarrassing to be caught in those circumstances, but I am going to endeavour this afternoon to say a few words,

because I am a northerner first, last and always, and I am proud to be a northerner.

The Treasurer made some remarks this afternoon when we were talking about whether or not this debate should proceed. He suggested we were retiring and resigning from northern Ontario because we were afraid to face the music of what the next election might bring. I can assure him and other members of the House that I decided over a year ago that I was going to retire.

I have been here for over 15 years, and in that 15 years I have accumulated seven grandchildren who hardly know me. I feel I owe my family something. I have been away a great deal, and I have reasons to retire. I am not afraid to face the music of what the next election might bring. As a matter of fact, I would remind the members that I went five times, three times with a minority government, and I came back each time.

My friend the member for Kenora, who is not here today to speak for himself, went two or three more elections than I, and I am sure he has his own personal reasons for retiring at this point. He is not afraid to face the music either. I just want to put that straight.

My friends the member for Nickel Belt and the member for Algoma mentioned my bill of some 10 years ago. It was just 10 years ago; first reading was April 28, 1977. The bill was to require a single price for gasoline and heating oil in Ontario. Had we done it then, we would have corrected the situation.

I pointed out at that time that we in northern Ontario have two penalties. We are not complaining about the first penalty; we choose to live in northern Ontario. Because of that, we have to drive farther than we would in southern Ontario to do the same amount of business, so we burn more gasoline. It is colder up north. We have to heat our homes longer and so we burn more heating oil. We do not complain about it because we choose to be northerners. What we do complain about is having to pay more for the fuel. That is the part that is not fair. That should be corrected. It should have been corrected 10 years ago when I brought in this bill. It was not and now is another opportunity to do it.

1730

There is another matter I would like to address in the few moments I have and that is the Northern Ontario Development Corp. It is a good program, but it could be much better for northern Ontario with some slight changes. I brought this to the attention of the officials at the standing committee on government agencies a few months ago. In many cases, when somebody applies for a

loan to get into business or to build a lodge or whatever, after a year or so he or she has to have additional capital for expansion. That person has to go back a second time and maybe even a third time to get more money before the project is really off and running. The trouble seems to be that every one of those loans is negotiated individually at a rate of interest that happens to apply according to the interest of the day. We all realize that back in the early 1980s, the interest rate was 20 per cent or so.

What I would like to see happen, so that it would be more valuable to people in the north, is that if a person has to apply for a second or third loan from NODC, those loans could all be rolled into one and the interest of the day would apply to that loan. Then people would not have three or four loans outstanding at three or four rates of interest that have to be paid three or four times a year. It just does not make any sense. I think this would help NODC do a much better job in northern Ontario.

I would like to point out that there are opportunities for industry up north. As a matter of fact, on September 30, 1985, I wrote to the Minister of Natural Resources and suggested that in my riding we have a pilot project in commercial aquaculture, raising trout in cages or ponds and then supplying the market in Ontario and even exporting them.

Fresh water is a commodity and a resource we have in northern Ontario that we are not using and we should be using it. Here we are each year importing many thousands of dollars' worth of trout from Idaho and other parts of North America to Ontario to provide for the market that we ourselves could be providing for. I laid out at great length how we should do it and how we could provide a great many jobs in doing that. So far, of course, nothing has happened.

In the estimates on February 4 of this year, I debated several things with the Premier who is also Minister of Northern Development and Mines. One was the rates on the Chi-Cheemaun ferry boat going from Tobermory to Manitoulin Island. The other was the need for doctors in Elliot Lake. Then I had to point out to him that he offended me when he made his opening remarks because he said in those opening remarks that the ministry had been on stream a year and that it had X dollars of funding, etc. I had to remind him that this ministry has been on stream for 10 years. I happened to know because I had done the legwork to get the Ministry of Northern Affairs in place back in 1976. Many of my colleagues will remember those debates.

The Premier and I had an exchange on this. He said that he appreciated my bringing this back because he remembered the debate and he remembered my participating in it. He was sorry he had offended me. Of course, I said I was not seriously offended, that I just wanted to bring to his attention that it was we who brought in the Ministry of Northern Affairs and not his government. He wound up saying to me, "I did not mean that, if I said it." He then said, as a matter of fact, "I say a lot of things I have to retract." I guess our Premier is only human after all, the same as the rest of us, because that is what he said to me on February 4.

I noticed this in the throne speech: "To further promote local initiatives and self-reliance, my government will establish a northern Ontario heritage fund. The fund will be administered in close consultation with the northern development councils."

I certainly support the idea of a heritage fund. I think it probably could have been, and should have been, in place long ago, but I am a little concerned about the administration. It seems to me it is something like when my wife says to me, "What colour do you want me to buy for my new dress?" I say, "I do not care what the colour is as long as it is red." I think the same thing will apply here. The heritage fund will be administered by people appointed by the present government and there will be more concern about how many votes it will get than about how much good it will do the north.

I say that tongue in cheek to some degree. I had the experience of having a director from my area on the Northern Ontario Development Corp. who had three years left in his term. I spoke to the minister about reappointing him. He told me that he would like to reappoint him and would do what he could. About 10 days later, he got a "Dear John" letter saying, "You are no longer needed," and that was the end of it. He was a good director. Since then, we have had no one from my area on that board. That has been a loss to me and to the people of northern Ontario. So I am just a little concerned about the administration of the heritage fund.

Mr. Morin-Strom: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this issue which is one very dear to my heart, as it is for everyone who lives in northern Ontario and for all of us in the Legislature who represent ridings in northern Ontario.

The problems we are facing have been manifest and escalating over the past few years. Unfortunately, they have been a long time in

coming and have been developing over the term of the previous administration as well. I find it slightly strange that this particular resolution should come from Conservative Party members, wailing about the problems of government inaction in northern Ontario, focusing on the problems we have been facing and the lack of government initiative. Certainly, this has not been a problem just over the past two years, but over quite a protracted period of time.

When I was elected two years ago, one of the prime issues in the election campaign was the issue the member for Algoma-Manitoulin brought up just before me, and that is high gasoline prices in northern Ontario. The fact that the Conservatives now have adopted this as an issue in northern Ontario is really strange because they ignored the problem for so long and certainly ignored it in the last provincial campaign in the north.

To some extent, it was one of the issues that gained myself and other New Democrats a lot of support across northern Ontario. It is one that the people of the north feel very passionately about. It is a symbol of the kind of injustices and inequities we face in the north in terms of our cost of living and our relative competitive position when it comes to our opportunities to attract business and to have businesses expand in northern Ontario.

I appreciate and commend the member for Algoma-Manitoulin for the fact that he did come forward as a northern Ontario representative 10 years ago and present a bill on uniform gas prices to the Legislature. It was an excellent initiative. Unfortunately, while it was one our party adopted and supported, it was blocked in the Legislature by his own party and no action was ever taken on that initiative.

Mr. Wildman: It was a Conservative government, was it not?

Mr. Morin-Strom: At that time it was a Conservative government.

It is an issue on which we have to have some action now. Not only do I support that initiative, but I also think that initiative made more sense than the initiative the Treasurer has speculated on as a possibility and that the current Conservative members are talking about; that is, to try to solve the problem by creating a difference in the taxation rate in southern Ontario versus northern Ontario.

1740

That initiative went to regulating gasoline prices and to ensuring that the same prices were in effect in all areas of the province. If a company

wanted to sell oil, home heating oil or automobile gasoline in Ontario, it would have to have the same price right across the province. I think that is an approach this government should look at very seriously. If they know what is good for them in terms of where popular opinion is in northern Ontario and what would be of tremendous benefit to the people of northern Ontario, they would act in a like fashion.

I would like to express concern about many of the other areas in which we have seen a lack of Conservative action in the past and continued lack of action by the Liberals in the past two years. In Sault Ste. Marie, we are facing a serious crisis as a result of the massive layoffs that we have seen at Algoma Steel. Last spring, having already lost some 4,000 jobs since 1982, Algoma Steel announced another program to lay off another 1,500 workers.

The Ontario government's reaction to that has been clearly inadequate for the city of Sault Ste. Marie. The focus of its action has been the transfer of some 360 jobs that are coming to Sault Ste Marie. While that will make an important contribution, it pales in comparison with the revenues the jobs that we have lost from Algoma Steel Corp.; not only that but also the jobs have not come yet.

The much-touted policy that the Liberal members have talked about in this debate, moving 1,200 jobs to northern Ontario and some 360 of these to Sault Ste. Marie, has not occurred. Not one of these jobs has moved yet. The only thing that has happened is they have got to the point of picking the architects for the buildings. The construction of the buildings has not started in any of the locations in northern Ontario. We do not have the construction jobs and we do not have the real jobs that have been promised. I hope this government intends to have those jobs in place in northern Ontario before it goes before the people of the north on an election call.

I also express some grave concerns about the announcement in the speech from the throne—it was woefully inadequate in terms of initiatives for northern Ontario—that highlighted the initiative of the northern Ontario fund. To me, the fund that was proposed was a con job. The fund has no provincial money in it whatsoever. The money is coming from the lumber industry. The federal government is taking the tax that it has imposed on the lumber industry and it is going to pass it down to the provincial government which will put it in this fund. It is not putting one cent of provincial resource into that fund. This shows the

kind of commitment we have from this government to the future of northern Ontario.

That fund was committed by the federal government and the provincial government, from our understanding, to go to those communities that were to be hurt by the lumber-industry difficulties that would result from the 15 per cent duty. That action has to be taken. Those funds should be used as resources to attack the immediate problems in those communities.

The heritage fund should be a fund to look at the future, an investment in the future. It should be building capital, investing and providing resources to northern communities from the income on that fund. To do so, one needs a substantial infusion of money up front and then a regular process of funding that will ensure growth of that fund in the long run. A fund of some \$30 million to \$40 million is not going to produce very much in terms of income for resource development in northern Ontario.

I will also express one new concern that has not been talked about here, and that is in the environmental area. I think the Liberal government has ignored northern Ontario when it comes to the serious environmental concerns in the north. One that I want to bring to light is the issue of the low-level flight testing by US bombers over some of our major provincial parks in northern Ontario and over a major area of northern Ontario.

It was brought up in the select committee on the environment during the recess, and the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) completely stonewalled this issue. While environmental studies are ongoing in the western provinces in consultation with the provincial governments in Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia on similar flight paths, the provincial government of Ontario has completely abandoned its responsibility to do anything about ensuring the environmental integrity of northern Ontario and the protection of that environment before permitting any such flights to take place.

I would ask the provincial government to look seriously at this decision and to reflect some of the interests of those of us who live in northern Ontario. My time is up, so I thank you, Mr. Speaker, very much.

Mr. Gillies: I am very pleased to join in this debate on behalf of our party, and I want to make a few comments before getting to the specifics of the resolution and the challenge that faces us up north.

I want to say a few words about the tone of this debate and the direction it has taken, which I believe has been most unfortunate indeed at various points. I want to indicate to a few members of the governing caucus, in all their self-satisfied smugness—which they have displayed this afternoon with an arrogance that is truly unparalleled and which I assume comes from kissing the hem of their leader, King David—that when I hear the kind of unbased, groundless—

Mr. Epp: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I just want to record the fact that when the member spoke about arrogance, the members of the House broke up in a great deal of laughter because they felt it applied to that side of the House more than to this side.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wildman: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order: I want to say these guys were just as arrogant as those guys.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you for your point of view.

Mr. Gillies: I do not want to get into an arrogance fest with my friends opposite or to the side. I have never considered myself arrogant, but perhaps I am the last person I should be asking.

Seriously, I have heard a couple of contributions to this debate this afternoon which I feel completely miss the point. It is not a question of noblesse oblige or who feels he has the most to offer the north the closer one gets to an election, and who has done more and who was wrong and who was the minister. I really think it is unfortunate if we are going to expend the greater part of this debate on that nonsense.

I do not want to get into trading insults with my friend the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini), but when he makes disparaging remarks about my colleague the member for Kenora, I would say to him—he has been here a few years and he should know—that he would have to serve in this Legislature an awfully long time before he could do a fraction of what the member for Kenora did for northern Ontario in the years he was minister. I would suggest to the government that its record in the north and, indeed, the record of the minister who succeeded the member for Kenora in his responsibilities, are not ones on which I would particularly want to hang my hat.

1750

Our colleague, who is not here—he is probably out flying somewhere. Perhaps for the sake of

brevity, I will refer to him from here on in as Sky King. Members will recall there was a television show in the 1950s called Sky King. I see it on reruns the odd time. This man used to get into a little plane and fly from bush camp to bush camp rescuing people in distress and breaking up gunfights. He had a dog. I cannot remember the dog's name. To continue the analogy, the dog was sort of a parliamentary assistant in a fur coat.

When I think of our friend the member for Cochrane North, I think of Sky King flying across northern Ontario, community to community, handing out cheques left and right, doing the work of the Liberal Party across northern Ontario and, I would hope, incidentally doing the work of the government, although I have little confidence in that. I have to tell my friends that is not good enough.

I would also suggest to the government spokespersons from whom we heard earlier, who do not believe the economic situation in northern Ontario merits an emergency debate, that they have not paid close enough attention. Perhaps they were not, as were some of us, in the north with the standing committee on resources development when we were discussing the plant shutdowns in the resource industries. They were not in the north to hear the remarks that were made to us by the steelworkers in Sudbury, for example, who spoke to us out of the frustration of endless surveys, endless studies, endless commissions and endless visits from the member for Cochrane North and his colleagues.

Out of that frustration they told our committee, "Unless the governments of this country and province are prepared to accept the challenge and have the political will to formulate programs that address the unique problems in the north, the many task forces such as we are addressing today are simply a waste of time." One has to agree with them.

When we see the kind of vacuous and vague promises made to northern Ontario in the government's most recent throne speech, I do not think it will be getting any kudos from the steelworkers, from the regional chairman in Sudbury or from the other people who appeared before our committee with a couple of very clear messages. If we had felt that this government was receiving and acting on this message, then this emergency debate would not have been necessary.

That message is simply this: The recession is over in southern Ontario. My riding, which had unemployment of over 25 per cent at one point in 1982 and which now has an unemployment rate

of about seven per cent, is doing all right. I want to tell the members on the government benches that the recession continues in northern Ontario. It is worse in northern Ontario, and they have not come close to meeting the challenge that faces us.

We were in Thunder Bay the last week in February when our resources committee was in northern Ontario. We were told that the unemployment rate in that city would be well in excess of 11 per cent or 12 per cent but that in the country surrounding the city, out in the region, the unemployment rate was probably closer to 25 per cent.

Earlier, my colleague the member for Cochrane South mentioned the increase in layoffs. We are quite willing to accept responsibility for the period during which we had the responsibility for governing this province. What frustrates us is when the Liberals refuse to take the responsibility for what they have wrought and for which they are responsible. Two years out, it is not enough.

As our friend the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology seems to want to predicate every answer to every question in question period, "It is not enough any more to say '42 years.'" It is not enough. The Liberals have had two years.

Last year, layoffs in northwestern Ontario were up 400 per cent. Last year, layoffs in northeastern Ontario were up more than 40 per cent. The Liberals have bungled softwood lumber. They have not met the commitments they made to the people of Ontario during the election campaign in 1985.

Mr. Wildman: You never opposed what the feds were doing.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Gillies: When the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), as leader of the Liberal Party, was running for the office he now holds, he said to the working people in this province, "If I become Premier of Ontario, in a Peterson-led Ontario you will not have these layoff problems."

I remember because the now Premier said it in Kitchener. He said it to the laid-off workers at Burns Meats. He said: "In a Peterson-led Ontario we will not have layoffs. We will have procedures in place to ensure that this does not happen. We will change the Employment Standards Act to make sure that more people caught in layoffs are covered." The now Premier said he was going to do all of these things.

Two years later any one of us can stand in this House, as I did in the very first question I, as Labour critic, asked the Minister of Labour (Mr.

Wrye) one and a half years ago. I said to him very simply, "When are you going to close the loopholes in the severance-pay provisions of the Employment Standards Act?"

Mr. Mancini: Are you still the Labour critic?

Mr. Gillies: No, I am not the Labour critic for my party any more, but two years later I still want to know from the Minister of Labour when we are going to see action on some of these things that, in order to get power, he was so piously telling this province he was going to do.

The Liberals have power now and they are not exercising it in the interests of the north. They are not exercising it in the interests of working people. While they do not think this debate was necessary, we do.

Mr. Warner: The member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) really has incredible nerve. The very problems he spoke about, which he thought should be solved and was so happy to attack the Premier on, are the very things he voted against as a member of the committee when he had the opportunity to support the proposal put forward by my party. He voted against them. Talk about nerve.

When I sit here and listen to the Progressive Conservative members participate in the debate, I sometimes wonder whether what we have in the Conservative Party is the largest collection of amnesia victims ever assembled in one place.

It is certainly evident to me as a member living in southern Ontario and enjoying a relatively good standard of living that in fact we have two worlds in this province; we have two economies. What southerners sometimes tend to forget is that when we extend a subway in Metropolitan Toronto, when an Ontario Place is built or when a domed stadium is built, in large measure the money to build those things comes from northern Ontario.

In southern Ontario we enjoy the benefits from the resources that have been extracted from the north. The northerners who are supplying us with the wherewithal to build the subways and the domed stadium do not get in return the kind of benefit they should derive from those resources.

This province historically, and continued by the Liberals, is quite prepared not to do anything about developing the secondary resources in the north. We are not prepared to do anything about ensuring that we build the mining machinery in

the north or that we have those secondary industries related to the forest. The previous government was not prepared to exercise the kind of leadership required in that area, and neither are the Liberals.

In the last few seconds remaining, I will mention one of the anomalies I have encountered in the portfolio of looking at colleges. The government says colleges cannot have residences; in southern Ontario, especially in Metropolitan Toronto, that makes eminent good sense, but not in the north. The north has particular areas where it is important to have student residences, but the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) treats the north just like everywhere else and does not understand that there is a difference between the world of the north and the world of the south.

The north has not been well served by the Tories; similarly, the new Tories, the ones with the red ties, are not serving the north well either.

Mr. Gordon: What a fantastic speech. Take a bow.

Mr. Warner: They said, "Encore."

Mr. Speaker: Order. The clock says six o'clock and the standing orders state that that concludes the debate.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: I am quite pleased to be able to stand as acting House leader. I am neither the image nor likeness of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) or Mr. Wells, but I have the task and I will proceed.

I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

Debate on the speech from the throne will continue all next week with the exception of Thursday morning, May 14, when we will deal with private members' business standing in the names of the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville) and a replacement for the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson), to be identified by motion on Monday. That person may well be the member for Algoma-Manitoulin (Mr. Lane), as I understand it, but that will have to be dealt with on Monday.

That is the business of the House for next week.

The House adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

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No. 8

Hansard

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Monday, May 11, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday, May 11, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Brandt: On March 13, along with three of my colleagues, I held a press conference requesting that the government take into consideration the need for some major changes in the Workers' Compensation Act. At that time, the major recommendation made by my colleagues, which was subsequently supported by the third party, was that the act should be redrafted and that these major changes should come about as quickly as possible. The vehicle we recommended to the government to undertake these changes was a royal commission.

I take this opportunity today to remind the government and the minister of the press conference we held and of the recommendations that were made. When one looks at the difficulties surrounding the whole concept of workers' compensation and the frustration of workers in having their cases dealt with in an expeditious manner and, on the other side of the coin, the problems of ever-escalating costs that are related to the employers of the province, there is indeed a great deal of frustration and disenchantment with the present system.

I urge the government to move on this issue. The act was drafted in 1915 and requires revision. Now is the time to move on it, and the method by which the act can be revised is a royal commission and the recommendations that would flow out of that.

PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr. Wildman: On May 6, I raised in the House the question of the missing Holiday Beach Provincial Park. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) was completely oblivious of the fact that he had taken Holiday Beach out of the provincial park system and that the ministry had not notified the Ministry of the Environment, as required by the exemption order MNR 30. The minister seemed to think that Holiday Beach was in my constituency of Algoma rather than in the

riding of the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini).

Then on May 7, in a rather lame attempt to explain where Holiday Beach Provincial Park had disappeared, the member for Essex South stated, "I approached the minister with the same proposition that I had made to the Conservative government, to turn the park over to a public body such as the Essex Region Conservation Authority, and the minister did."

It is not enough, though, for the member for Essex South to say he had the missing park in his pocket. The minister must explain how the Ministry of Natural Resources could remove a provincial park from the park system without public consultation, contravening the Environmental Assessment Act. Is the explanation simply that the minister was doing a political favour for his colleague the member for Essex South?

NURSES' WEEK

Mr. D. R. Cooke: This is Nurses' Week. The House often finds itself commemorating a group or an event because it rightfully deserves public attention. It is also National Tourism Week, health care week and Police Week, but at the same time these people and events generally find themselves overlooked. Nurses in Canada are such a group. They perform a heavy work load, sometimes under unimaginable conditions of stress, yet they receive less credit than they deserve.

Considering that all of us have been or will be sick from time to time, I find it surprising that the contributions of nurses continue to be undervalued in comparison with others in the professions. As a first point of entry into the health care system, nurses stand as psychologists, soothers and healers to the patient. As a partial solution to the increasing burden on health care, the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario has put forward an excellent proposal regarding increased participation in a preventive medicare system.

I think I speak for all members of the House when I say to the over 45,000 registered and graduate nurses: "Thank you. Keep up the good

work. I hope your contributions will be recognized year-round.”

1340

NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. Andrewes: This morning the Toronto Sun reported that the Atomic Energy Control Board had launched an investigation into a fire at the Bruce nuclear power plant last Friday afternoon. During the fire, 150 workers were on the job at the site. None was injured, but it was necessary to evacuate the entire work force from the plant. Although it appears the fire was handled capably by Ontario Hydro employees, the most surprising aspect of this incident is the fact that Ontario Hydro failed to notify local police or fire officials of this event.

The Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) and the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) insist that nuclear safety matters are of utmost importance to this Liberal government and that procedures for informing the public of accidents within a nuclear generating station are well in hand. Since Ontario Hydro failed to notify local authorities of this matter, we must ask some very serious questions. Was the Minister of Energy aware of this event? Was the Solicitor General informed? Does the government not regard these issues as being serious enough to notify local police and fire departments so that evacuation plans might be ready in the event that the fire were more serious than originally anticipated?

MEMORIAL CUP

Mr. Breagh: I just want to take the opportunity to remind members that this week Oshawa is hosting the Memorial Cup junior hockey championship round. We have teams from Medicine Hat in the western junior league and Longueuil in Quebec. I attended the match last night. Just after the end of the second period, a hockey game broke out and the Oshawa Generals won again. That makes two wins in a row for the Oshawa team. We are very proud of this team. We are proud that the Civic Auditorium was chosen as the site for this championship and that Bill Kurelo and his crew there are putting on a really fine show for visitors.

We hope that as many members as possible get out to Oshawa and see this great hockey event. We were working on the crowd last night. They were giving lots of assistance to the referees. The referees, of course, appreciated all this advice and calling things to their attention. The crowd got a little bit excited last night. They were getting into the swing of things. The guy next to

me had his hair painted red, white and blue. I do not think that is a new trend, but it was working well last night. By the end of the week, we should have our act together and we hope we will have a successful championship and keep that cup right in Oshawa.

VISITEURS

M. Guindon: Monsieur le Président, dans le quelque temps qu'il me reste, je veux vous remercier de votre effort à l'égard des élèves de ma circonscription de Cornwall, les finisseurs de l'Ecole senior la Citadelle. Je veux aussi leur souhaiter la bienvenue ici à Queen's Park.

MINISTER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Harris: I am always delighted to get in on a statement if time permits. Perhaps I could comment briefly on the great and laudable efforts of the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) when he went to Ottawa to lobby for more money for infrastructure—that is, roads, bridges and sewer work—for the municipalities. Many municipalities across this province and indeed across this country, particularly those of northern Ontario, have been saying that over the last couple of years the situation is deteriorating; they are not getting enough money to keep up with some of these efforts.

At FONOM last weekend—that is the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities—the minister said: “I went to Ottawa and asked the minister for federal money, even though it is provincial jurisdiction. We need federal money to help us do this. I lobbied hard and the feds said no. I came away empty-handed; the dirty, rotten feds.” That is what he said.

But what did he say in Ottawa to the CBC? He was asked, “Why are you here?” He said, “I am lobbying for more money.” They asked, “Who needs the money?” He said, “They need money in Nova Scotia; they need money in Newfoundland.” The question from the CBC reporter: “What about Ontario?” The answer: “Oh no, Ontario does not need the money. We are okay in Ontario.”

It begs a lot of questions. Is the minister misleading the people of northeastern Ontario? Is he misleading the people of Ontario?

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Harris: I have almost 47 seconds left. Interjections.

Mr. Harris: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would be glad to fill in.

It begs a number of questions. Is the minister being honest with these municipalities in north-eastern Ontario? Was he, in fact, in Ottawa lobbying hard for Ontario? No; he said Ontario is okay. It begs another question. Why are the taxpayers of Ontario paying for a minister to go to Ottawa and say, "Ontario is okay, but I am lobbying on behalf of other provinces"? Does that make sense? There are a number of questions that really are not answered. Is this another example of two different stories which we see so often from ministers of the crown in this government?

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

POLICE WEEK

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I am sure the honourable members are aware that this is Police Week in Canada, and I ask them to join me in expressing Ontario's appreciation for the men and women who serve us so ably.

Policing has never been more complex than it is in the 1980s, and our officers face challenges never dreamed of by the men and women who served with such distinction in the past. Today's police officers must be special people; not only do they uphold the law, but we also often ask them to serve as rescuers, social workers and goodwill ambassadors.

Our officers have demonstrated time and time again that they are up to these challenges, and I urge the members to show their appreciation by giving Police Week their wholehearted support. It is a way to thank our police officers for a job well done.

PENSION BENEFITS

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I wish to make a statement in connection with my responsibilities as Minister of Financial Institutions.

Prior to clause-by-clause review of the Pension Benefits Act, Bill 170, I intend to introduce an amendment to the act that will be of benefit to the workers of the Goodyear factory in Etobicoke that is scheduled to close on May 31, 1987.

Current pension legislation provides that when a plant closes and there is a defined benefits plan, pension entitlements are accelerated for workers who are not otherwise entitled to pensions but who are at least age 45 and have at least 10 years of service.

Our proposed legislation, Bill 170, does not use the age 45 and 10 years' service test but instead states that age and service must add up to 55. This avoids discrimination on the basis of

age. It also helps younger, long-service employees get some pension on plant closure.

I have met personally with representatives of the Goodyear workers. They have indicated that if section 75 of Bill 170 is made applicable to the Goodyear closure, approximately 300 employees will get benefits they would not receive under current legislation. This is because Goodyear has a large number of younger but long-service workers.

It is for this purpose that I will be seeking an amendment to the Pension Benefits Act to ensure that section 75 will apply to all windups in whole or in part of a pension plan where the effective date of the windup occurs on or after April 1, 1987.

[Interruption]

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would just like to remind all our visitors in the galleries that they are not allowed to demonstrate in any way. We are glad they are here to listen, but please do not demonstrate in any way.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Obviously, an expeditious passage of Bill 170 would aid the Goodyear workers. In any event, I intend to move the motion that the bill be so modified.

Bill 170 would also assist Goodyear workers in another area of dispute with the company. There is ambiguity about whether the company can refuse to consent to pay certain ancillary benefits to workers over age 55 with 10 years of service. The second motion I intend to introduce will make it clear that on plant closure, the company is deemed to consent to such payments.

In addition to my meetings with the Goodyear workers, officials of my ministry have consulted at length with the Ministry of Labour in the development of these motions. Copies of these motions have been circulated with this statement. As well, copies of these motions will be circulated to all members in advance of clause-by-clause review of Bill 170.

FUEL SAFETY

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: In my capacity as Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations, I am pleased to announce that in co-operation with the Ministry of Energy, a government-industry committee with consumer representation has been established to examine all aspects related to the siting of facilities for dispensing alternative transportation fuels such as propane and natural gas.

Last November, there was a propane explosion in a taxi undergoing repair in a Toronto

garage. The property also contained a propane storage tank and dispensing facilities.

While these propane facilities were in no way associated with or affected by the vehicle explosion, their location near a residential area caused concern among local residents about potential dangers. Questions also began to surface concerning other sites in the Toronto area, questions dealing not only with general safety but also with noise, air pollution and traffic congestion.

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These concerns caused some municipalities to examine their zoning bylaws with a view to enacting tougher siting conditions, particularly in or near residential areas. As a result, a number of separate municipal bylaws are being contemplated. The government-industry committee will help us to retain regulatory uniformity across the province while avoiding potential conflict with other provincial regulations.

The committee membership includes representatives from municipal governments, the provincial government, the propane and natural gas industries and the Consumers' Association of Canada. It will be chaired by the director of the fuels safety branch of my ministry.

The goal of the committee is to consider the drafting of a model zoning bylaw for municipal consideration and to determine the extent to which revisions may be needed to the Ontario regulations covering alternative transportation fuels safety.

Ontario safety codes for propane and natural gas will be compared with those in other jurisdictions and with codes for conventional fuels such as gasoline.

The committee will consider both the exposure to risk and the consequences of an accident. It will review the experiences of various jurisdictions in which there were actual incidents at fuel transfer facilities, conversion centres and automobile repair garages. A report summarizing the conclusions and recommendations of the committee will be forwarded to me this fall.

RESPONSES

PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. Ashe: I rise to congratulate the Minister of Financial Institutions for finally listening to the opposition and doing something for the Goodyear workers. If there is one bit of concern, it is the fact that it has taken him several months to react to something that was suggested to him. There was no doubt that the vehicle of Bill 170 was a way to recognize service for some 300

employees. As long as he does not go the route that he has gone with the car insurance situation, where he is changing his mind and creating new policy on a daily basis, we congratulate him in finally recognizing that these 300 workers deserve at least some consideration under a revised Bill 170.

POLICE WEEK

Mr. Partington: I rise on behalf of my party in paying tribute to the policemen and police-women of this province who serve us so well and in so many ways.

Some areas of Ontario have requested the help of the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) in providing the high-quality, affordable, first-class policing that most of us are used to. The minister and the ministry have been slow in responding.

The minister should use this week, use his statement and commit himself to providing the resources and systems necessary to provide a high standard of policing to all areas of Ontario.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mrs. Grier: I would like to thank the Minister of Financial Institutions for the statement he has made today. I think the response is an entirely appropriate one and I am very glad that, although it took a petition being submitted in this House, appearances at committee meetings by the Goodyear union, letters and meetings with the minister and with other parties, and finally a demonstration on the front lawn, we have it. That is a great victory.

I hope it symbolizes that the government has recognized the need to provide protection for workers subject to layoffs. As the list of plant closures continues to grow, I look forward to seeing support from the government for not only this piece of legislation being done retroactively but also other legislation that will make sure the workers of this province do not have to pay the price for corporate restructuring.

Mr. Speaker: Any further responses? The member for York South.

Mr. Rae: I am sorry. I was—

Mr. Partington: Dreaming.

Mr. Rae: No, I was not dreaming. I was waiting for something to happen that did not happen.

FUEL SAFETY

Mr. Rae: I have a response to the comment of the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations about the committee that he set up on the siting of propane and natural gas tanks. The

minister says the incident to which he referred took place in a Toronto garage. The minister should know that it took place in a city of York garage, about three blocks from my constituency office on Weston Road.

It is an important reality now that a number of groups are concerned. The only practical suggestion I would make to the minister is that, in addition to the committee membership he has proposed, I think those residents who have expressed their concern so vigorously should be represented directly.

The minister will know that both in the east end of the city of Toronto and in the west end, in my riding, very active citizens' groups have been formed. I am sure that is one of the reasons the minister has set up this committee. Many people who have been active in those residents' associations have a particular point of view that is not always completely in line with the official view of their municipal governments. The minister might want to consider having them represented as well as the Consumers' Association of Canada.

I cannot stress how strongly I think it is necessary for governments to get their act together on this question, because unless we have a common approach we are going to continue to have many residents frustrated at the local level, because they are consistently told by their solicitors at the city council level that the cities have no authority at all to deal with the very real concerns that exist.

I hope the legal situation and the political situation with respect to these sites will be clarified. I think it is important that this be done.

PENSION BENEFITS

Mr. Rae: While I am on my feet, I also want to congratulate, together with all other members of the New Democratic Party, the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier) who, as I told the Goodyear workers this morning, has been an absolute bulldog on the question of protection for the Goodyear workers. She has done an outstanding job as a constituency member and I think it is fair to say that without her work and her contribution, and without the work of many of her colleagues, this change would not have been announced. I think the member should have been given credit by the minister. Since she was not given credit by the minister, I am going to give her credit because she thoroughly deserves it.

FUEL SAFETY

Mr. Reville: I would like to comment further on the committee on the siting of alternative

transportation fuels outlets. This is an issue that has been of concern to residents in my riding, following on the events in the city of York. As my leader has said, there are a number of issues that need addressing. We need to get a common and thoughtful approach to the siting of alternative fuels. I hope the minister is going to include officials from the fire marshal's office on such a committee, because clearly that is one of the issues that concerns people. There are also the issues of pollution, congestion and traffic that need to be addressed, and it is not sufficient for municipal councils to have to include these uses under ancillary uses. We need a real policy on this matter.

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I have a brief point concerning the House business, and the House leader (Mr. Nixon) may be interested and prepared to respond.

It concerns the Premier (Mr. Peterson). From time to time, there will be events and emergencies that will require the Premier to be away from this Legislature, even in spite of the important business that is on, and we understand that. An emergency may develop or there may be a first ministers' conference, and I think the public and certainly the members of this Legislature accept that.

But it is insulting to colleagues from all three parties in this Legislature that, on a date and at a time that are obviously of the Premier's own choosing and which he can set, his priority today is to be downtown naming the new dome instead of being here in question period.

It disrupts this Legislature. It shows the importance the government and the Premier attach to the important issues of the day right here.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of order; that is a point of view.

1400

MEMBER FOR GREY-BRUCE

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I want to invite the House to take a moment today, if the clock might stop, to acknowledge the retirement of yet another member of the House. One was announced last week, that of my colleague the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier), but we discovered over the weekend that the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent), or Owen Sound as we would know him, has also chosen to take his leave of the House. Just for a moment before we begin today, with the consent of the House, I want to acknowledge his decision, as

the House was kind enough to acknowledge the decision of my colleague.

Mr. Speaker: The request has been made. Is there unanimous consent?

Agreed to.

Mr. Grossman: I want to understate the case by pointing out how badly the member for Grey-Bruce will be missed from this House. Indeed, we will miss his departures from the House, for which he holds the undisputed record, a record which, like some other records I can think of, I would estimate will never be broken.

Those of us who have had the opportunity to work for the member will know of his effervescence, generosity, good nature and good humour on all occasions. One would understate it by saying he is somewhat colourful. He has been provocative on more than one occasion.

Mr. Ferraro: No.

Mr. Grossman: It is true; he has been. What is always warming about him is that on many days we have seen him rail in this House; oh, even once or twice getting upset about Ontario Hydro contracts and the like. I am sure he does the same inside the government caucus now on the same issue. Yet five minutes later, out in the hall, he would be inviting the minister he had just attacked verbally out for a drink, a hockey game or just a good laugh.

I first met the member when I was 12 or 13 years old. My father and I were off somewhere. We were at the Toronto Island Airport—we were probably over there campaigning—and we met the member for Grey-Bruce, who was at the Island Airport getting his own private plane, which he owned and flew at the time, repaired.

He will not remember this, but my father first introduced me to him and the honourable member took out his business card for me. I did not have much business to do with him, actually. It did not have the crest of the Legislature on it; it had, I would estimate, the names of 15 or 20 subsidiaries of the then Sargent empire, all sorts of companies on this card, including an aircraft service.

What I remember best was that the mechanic happened to come up to the member at that time and say: "Mr. Sargent, your plane is ready. The propeller has been fixed and is back on the plane. You can take it now." The member said, "Not so fast, now you go and fly it and bring it back before I take delivery of it."

In any event, for those of us who have had the opportunity to skate with him, both here and at Maple Leaf Gardens, to the Legislature's chief

scout, general manager and coach of the hockey team, to someone who comes to this House with unusual roots in that his mother was a Progressive Conservative and his father a Co-operative Commonwealth Federation member, I can only say many of us regret he did not take the advice of his mother. Indeed, all I can say is that he, like many of the other members who have indicated their retirement, will be greatly missed.

Since, as we all know, there is a long, 24-months minimum left in the term, I suspect we will have to find a way to recognize all those members who, like my colleague the member for York West (Mr. Leluk), have indicated their intention to retire. I hope there is an appropriate moment where we can recognize those who have been perhaps less colourful, as all of us have been, than the member for Grey-Bruce, but who have made an important and valid contribution over their years of service, like my colleague the member for York West. That is for another day. For today, I simply wanted to take a moment of the House to acknowledge the enormous presence, geniality and unusual but important contribution made by the retiring member for Grey-Bruce.

Mr. Rae: The member for Grey-Bruce can sit down; he will get his chance.

When I read the national edition of the *Globe and Mail* up north on the weekend and saw that the member for Grey-Bruce had made a decision not to run again, I knew there were many households that felt the way I did; and many people across the province have said, as I said to the honourable member when I came in today, "Say it ain't so, Eddie," because there are a great many of us who have learned a lot from the member.

I think I can say, on behalf of all members of this caucus, and certainly I want to say personally, he has always demonstrated, apart from the enormous colourfulness, the way in which he would express himself—I must say with a little sadness that we have not been able to see quite the same volcanic expression from the member since he has been sitting over there as when he was sitting on this side.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: We have that all to ourselves now.

Mr. Rae: That is right. As the Treasurer has said, I am sure there are other avenues and other places where the explosions take place; I am just a little sorry they have happened with less frequency here.

Let me say to the member, quite apart from those qualities and the political qualities he has

demonstrated in this House, I think all of us would want to say that in political life one meets many different types of people, but we will rarely meet the like of the member for Grey-Bruce, someone whose kindness, whose basic gut decency, whose sense of humour and sense of fun are equally applied and shared with members of all parties.

I can remember having the pleasure of meeting the member when I was in federal politics and having a great sense of fun. We met in the member's riding, where I had been invited to attend a banquet. I can honestly say that I think my friendship with him dates back to that time. I am delighted to be considered a friend of Eddie Sargent. I know everybody in the House feels that way about him.

As has been said by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), we are sorry the member is not going to be with us in 1990 or 1992, whenever that time comes, but we want him to know how much we all love him, how much we respect the quality and the spirit with which he has served the people of his constituency, and we know he will continue to do that. We are only sorry he is not going to be doing it in the Legislature, and we look forward to many happy years of sharing some jokes and perhaps the odd glass or two as we reflect on some of the vagaries of political life.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am delighted, on behalf of my colleagues, to join in the comments made by the leaders of the opposition parties—delighted in the sense that the member for Grey-Bruce has established so many good friends on all sides of this Legislature.

The delight ends there, because I do not like to see him leave. I remember when he came into the House in 1963. We needed a little pep, I will tell you, and he provided it in the most effective way that we have observed on all sides.

Even before being elected to the Legislature, he was not only the mayor of Owen Sound but also was well known right across the country for his personal attributes and his ability to phrase his views in response to issues in a way that commanded attention.

As a House leader on both sides, I have always had an understanding of his sensitivity when it came to the nuances of the rules of the Legislature. At one stage, I can recall, when there was not the great spectrum of advice available to private members from staff that has grown so effectively in recent months, the member for Grey-Bruce was the only one with a paid assistant. He was the only one who had the

dough to pay for anybody like that, but he had a very bright gentleman who was assisting in speech preparation, and he came into the House every day with a big load of questions.

The effectiveness of the opposition became apparent. We moved him down to the front. He was in charge of questions, and every day he just knocked the government of the day right out of its seat. It was great; very good. I can recall many of these occasions, both in the House and out.

On a more personal basis, the member and I competed for the leadership of the great Liberal Party of Ontario on two occasions. We had an interesting time, to say the least. I think I can fairly say, and I hope he will confirm, we came out of that as good friends as we went in. But my experience is that vying with the member for Grey-Bruce in the realm of hospitality and conviviality is a real challenge; he was always very effective in that regard.

1410

On a much more serious note, I want to say that Eddie's wife, Roma, was an extremely highly regarded person, in association with the member, and naturally his family as well. From my point of view and my wife's point of view, Roma was so highly regarded that I even hesitate to mention it, but Eddie and I understand that very much; she was such a fine lady and she is missed so much, certainly by Eddie and his family and by everybody who knew her.

It seems to me that as this list grows longer and longer, the House leaders should get together at one of their meetings and apportion the responsibility for a wine-and-cheese or something at which we could all get together and review these matters—some time in the next two or three years—because it would be a shame if all the goodwill associated with our good friends who are making other career decisions were to be dissipated or in any way truncated by intervening events. Perhaps at the Thursday meeting we should get together and discuss this matter, because I think people on all sides need a certain, let us say, relaxation opportunity before the weather gets too warm.

Meanwhile, Eddie, we salute you, sir. We want to talk to you further about it, but you make the decision; it is an important one. We appreciate your friendship and wish you well.

Mr. Rowe: Look at that blue tie.

Mr. Sargent: I think I am going to give it away today.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Grey-Bruce may have a few words in response.

Mr. Sargent: I did not hear the time factor. How long? I would hate to get bounced out today.

Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Opposition, the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the member for York South (Mr. Rae) and all of us here, I want to say—I wish I had something intelligent to say, which is not unusual.

I think of the fellow who wanted to send his mother a birthday present. He lived in Chicago; she lived in New York. So he thought he would get her something special and bought her a talking parrot. He sent it to her a few days before her birthday, and finally he phoned her after her birthday and said, “Did you get my present?”

She said, “Oh, it was delicious.” He said, “You didn’t eat that bird, did you?”

She said, “Yes, I did.” He said, “That bird could speak five languages.” She said, “Well, why didn’t he say something?”

The Treasurer speaks about the leadership campaign. As far as I ever got in the leadership campaign was a parade one time. There was a demonstration before one came into the conference; I had a big demonstration, maybe about 20 people. Leading my parade was a large, very fat girl, obviously very pregnant, and she was carrying a sign that said, “Sargent is the man.”

The Leader of the Opposition mentioned hockey. I want to say that he is a very good hockey player; he is almost as good as the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). He is a gutsy guy, and we enjoyed that. While I am on my feet, I want to thank Syl Apps for what he accomplished in arranging with Harold Ballard for us to have unlimited time when the House could sit, etc. It was very generous of Harold Ballard and Syl Apps.

Will Rogers said once he never met a man he did not like. I never met a man in this House I did not like sometimes, but most times it was my fault if I did not like anyone.

I want to say the camaraderie in this place has been something I will always treasure. I hate to leave it, but there is a season for everything. God gave us memories so we can have roses in December, and I will always think of the many friendships I had here.

When we first came into the House, the Treasurer will remember, we had about 13 members. We could hold our caucus meetings in a phone booth then.

Mr. Breagh: You still can. There are only four.

Mr. Sargent: I will talk to you later.

The bottom line is that I have the greatest respect for John Robarts, Bill Davis and the member for London Centre (Mr. Peterson), because the pick of the crop always comes to the top. Those are three wonderful men, although we had our disagreements in the House.

I want to tell a story. One time Bill Davis was going around kicking tires on a jet. He found out that jet was going to have a very special bathroom in it with leather toilet seats. Jim up in the back seat there—we played hockey. When we finished the hockey season, they gave me a presentation of a leather toilet seat. I thought this would be a good shot to bring in to Bill Davis, so I brought it into the House. I held up this toilet seat, and someone said, “Why do you not look through it?” which I did. I cannot tell members the remarks he made, but we had a good time.

You can lead a horse to drink, but you cannot make him water. In this business, you have to have a desire to help people, and that is what it is all about. Someone has said that you cannot hope to change the whole world, but you can change the corner upon which you live. That is what this place is all about: helping people.

Each one of us is a very special person. Scientists tell us that at the centre of the Earth’s core is a solid block of granite a mile square. The subject matter was that in all of eternity there is only one person like the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel), and down the line one person like each individual. They described eternity as the time a hummingbird would fly every 24 hours past that solid block of granite. That is eternity.

We think we have a tough job here, but when you go back to a riding and get the friendship of the people you have helped over the years, it is all worth it.

On behalf of my family and everybody in my riding, I want to say God bless, see you in church.

DOMED STADIUM

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am reliably informed that the answer to the question in the minds of all members is the SkyDome.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: The only possible explanation is that was the name submitted by Don Smith.

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: Yes, the sky is the limit.

ORAL QUESTIONS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Grossman: Trying hard to follow the speech of the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent) and in the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who is not here because he wants to announce the name SkyDome for the Toronto stadium instead of joining us this afternoon, I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions.

If the minister's new rate review board is to follow his guidance and allow the insurance companies to break even on auto insurance and to make as much as a three per cent profit, to use the figures the minister speculated about, the net result to the average consumer in this province will be that his auto insurance rates will go up 7.5 per cent to give the auto insurance companies an additional \$170 million out of the pockets of auto drivers across this province. Given that reality, is the minister going to accept any recommendation, any ruling by the rate review board or is he reserving to himself the right to overrule that board?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I do not have any predetermined idea what the rate review board is going to do. The rate review board has the option to look at all the components and make a recommendation. The figures I used were from another jurisdiction and allow that profit. I do not know whether that is going to be the profit; I do not know whether that is going to be the thing. We are talking about hypothetical questions. When the rate review board is set up and when it reports, we will deal with its recommendations.

Mr. Grossman: I think we need that talking parrot back.

The issue is a very simple one. The auto insurance companies are going to be allowed by the minister at least to break even on auto insurance. Even he has acknowledged that. If that alone were permitted by the rate review board, they would be getting a 4.4 per cent increase out of every driver around the province. If they were to adopt the profit formula the minister himself talked about at the press conference—and we have the transcript here, subject to it being rewritten by Brad Nixon that is his latest policy position.

The reality is that the average consumer, the average auto insurance ratepayer in the province will end up having an increase of from 4.4 per cent to 7.5 per cent under the rate review board. My question is not a hypothetical one. Is the minister going to keep for himself the right to

overrule the decisions of the rate review board, or if it decides to allow a 7.5 per cent increase is he going to accept that?

There is the note from Brad.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The whole matter of rate review is not subject just to what we have today. We are looking at a total regime that we are implementing that by each one of those components could bring down insurance rates. We are looking at tort reform. We are looking at the Osborne report on no-fault. We are looking at automobile repair. We are looking at all those components. When all that comes together, we will find out what the rates are going to be.

Mr. Grossman: Last week, through Brad Nixon, it was explained that the minister would not allow the insurance companies to cross-subsidize into other areas of insurance but that auto would have to be funded from auto. That is what Brad Nixon said last week. The minister has also indicated that legislation will be introduced in this House in this session to complement and implement the announcement he made a couple of weeks ago. Surely he has the answer to this simple question: will the rate review board's decisions stand and be final or will the government retain to itself the right to overrule the rate review board? That is the simple question. What is the answer?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The simple answer is that the rate review board will meet. It will make its recommendations to the government and we will act on them.

Mr. Speaker: New question, the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Grossman: That directly contradicts what the minister said at the press conference and directly contradicts all the background material.

Mr. Speaker: New question and to which minister?

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier, who is announcing the sky-high dome, in the absence of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio), whose attendance we are hoping for, and in the absence of Brad Nixon, I will stand down my second question until the arrival of one of the above.

Mr. Speaker: The arrival of the Minister of Natural Resources?

Mr. Grossman: Or if the Premier is finished announcing the name of the new stadium, we will be happy to—

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed? Agreed.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Rae: My question is to the Minister of Labour. It concerns the announcement made today by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel with respect to lung cancer.

I have just come back from a meeting I had on Thursday in Timmins with a number of widows of miners who died as a result of lung disease. I wonder whether the minister can explain how it is possible that a disease standards panel established by him and by the Workers' Compensation Board, under legislation passed by the Legislature, could come up with a recommendation that effectively means workers have to have a total of 60 years of exposure. This means in essence that a miner starting work after 1955 will never be eligible, under the rule proposed by the majority, and that no miner could fulfil the 60 years of exposure, given the present age limits on when he can start work and when he must retire.

I wonder whether the minister can explain how that kind of obscenity could be described as any kind of standard in the province today.

Mr. Speaker: Minister? Order.

Mr. Rae: It effectively means that all those widows who have been waiting for years for some kind of justice from this province and from the Workers' Compensation Board will not be getting it under the Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The honourable member has asked his question.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I know my honourable friend wishes to reach a conclusion on this matter today, but I think he will know he should not, on his own behalf or that of anyone else, precipitately draw a conclusion.

The panel has now filed a report with the Workers' Compensation Board. Over the next 60 days, the Workers' Compensation Board will receive submissions, and I am sure it will receive submissions from a large number of groups on the report and perhaps on the appendix to the report, which is the findings of Dr. Muller and his group.

At the end of that period, the Workers' Compensation Board will turn its mind to making a final decision on this matter. This is the advice to the Workers' Compensation Board from the Industrial Disease Standards Panel. I think the honourable gentleman would wish to wait until the board has time to act on that advice.

Mr. Rae: The dissent to the report makes it clear that actually to qualify, a miner would have to have one of the following: 15 years of exposure before 1936; 20 years of exposure

between 1936 and 1944; 30 years of exposure between 1945 and 1954; or 60 years of exposure after 1955. In other words, the review panel has created a standard that will help absolutely no one; that is whom it is going to help.

I would like to ask the minister how it is possible in 1987, after all the experience we have had with asbestosis, after the experience we have had with silicosis and after the experience we have had with lung diseases in miners who are working in other industries, that a panel of the government of Ontario would be producing a standard that puts all the burden on the individual worker. That standard makes it impossible for that worker's survivors to get any kind of claim and any kind of right and ignores entirely the whole legal premise of the Workers' Compensation Board, which is that the benefit of the doubt should go to the worker—not to the company, not to the government, but to the worker. That is the standard that the minister has ignored. That is precisely what he has ignored.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I did not know that the Workers' Compensation Board had dealt with this matter yet. I can only repeat that the Workers' Compensation Board has received the advice of the Industrial Disease Standards Panel, advice which the panel was set up to provide. The leader of the third party was a member of this House when this determination was made in Bill 101. I am sure he knew what he was voting for then. It seems to me that what we have contemplated in Bill 101 is exactly what is being provided. The advice has been provided. It is now up to the Workers' Compensation Board to determine whether to accept any or all of the advice and, indeed, whether—and my friend raises the issue of benefit of the doubt—to go beyond the area that has been suggested by the panel.

While I am on my feet, I would not want to leave anything unsaid on the impression that the honourable member has given that nothing has happened in the mines between 1935 and 1987. The member will know that the standards in the gold mines and indeed in many of the other mines, in terms of air quality, have been toughened in a great many ways over the years, and this is particularly pertinent when we determine whether these payments will be made.

1430

Mr. Speaker: Order. Final supplementary, the member for Sudbury East.

Mr. Martel: A couple of weeks ago, I wrote the Premier (Mr. Peterson) a letter and I said, "The wording in the Muller study on exposure for

miners after 1945 leaves the door open to exclude them totally." They were weasel words.

Is it not a fact that when we dealt with the workers at the sintering plant at Inco, the Workers' Compensation Board initially took criteria that were out of whack? It started with three years of exposure, then two years, one year and three months, and the body count had to get yea high, more than 100, before we reached a criterion that was at least fair. Is the body count not that high now for the miners in the gold field? Do not play around with words about what the WCB is going to do.

Mr. Speaker: Minister.

Mr. Martel: The minister and I both know it will rule in favour of management.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat. Minister.

Mr. Martel: I have not asked the question yet.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Minister.

Mr. Martel: I have not asked a question, Mr. Speaker, so how can you ask the minister for an answer?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member started, "Is it a fact?"

Mr. Martel: Yes. Now the question is as follows—

Mr. Speaker: Right. Minister. Order.

Mr. Martel: I have seen some nonsensical things, Mr. Speaker, but you really are taking the cake today.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the honourable member take his seat.

Mr. Martel: What a game. They are only lies, Mr. Speaker, do not worry about it.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: We on this side take these matters very seriously. In providing the advice, whether the advice is accepted or not, I think the honourable member would agree with me that offering the advice and the advice that was offered establishing a probable connection between lung cancer and certain occupational groups in the gold mining industry, and indeed the views offered by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel in terms of stomach cancer, were very useful. Frankly, whether my honourable friend likes it or not, it has provided a body of thoughtful, scientific opinion that allows the Workers' Compensation Board to move forward—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. New question, the member for York South.

ACID RAIN

Mr. Rae: My question is to the Minister of the Environment in the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson). Can the minister tell us whether it is his view that the decision of the Ontario government to allow Ontario Hydro to bank its acid gas emissions one year against another increases Ontario's credibility when it comes to making statements in the United States about what the Americans should do?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I note that the particular report on the acid rain regulation was presented to the House on December 17, 1985. While at that time there were a few rumblings about that provision, the first time this matter has come up before the House once again is, I think, in this particular session. This is the first time the leader of the third party has raised this issue. While I recognize that there are a number of other important issues that come before the House, it was not something that obviously troubled the leader of the third party to the degree that a series of questions was asked at that time.

Mr. McClellan: Nobody dreamed it would be done so stupidly.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I did not hear the member for Bellwoods asking questions about it or complaining about it all that time.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Please do not answer the interjections.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The leader of the third party is aware that the select committee on the environment has given consideration to the acid rain program that we have in Ontario. I will be very interested in the report that comes forward from that committee and will certainly give full consideration to any of the recommendations that come forward from that committee so that we can have the best possible regulation.

Mr. Rae: I do not think I heard an answer to my question. I heard a lot of flip comments about the fact that a matter is before a committee. I did not hear an answer to my question.

Since the minister is not allowed to run the department, he has become a kind of public relations flack for the government of Ontario. He has been strolling across the United States talking glibly about acid rain.

Mr. Rowe: Mr. Clean.

Mr. Rae: The minister does not go to the US with clean hands. His government has brought

out a regulation with respect to Ontario Hydro's right to bank which effectively means that Ontario has been given the right to pollute, over and above government regulations, by his own ministry and by himself as the minister.

Does the minister not realize that decision on his part to allow Hydro to do that kind of banking dramatically reduces Ontario's credibility, it adds to our own acid rain problem here in Canada and it effectively means that when he goes to the US, the people of the US know he is just an empty bag of wind when it comes to acid gas and, in fact, he is not doing all that can be done with respect to acid rain?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I would not agree with the leader of the third party, who has now discovered this issue in the Ontario Legislature on—whatever it is today—May 11, 1987. It has suddenly become an issue for him on this date.

I can tell the leader of the third party that people such as Senator Mitchell, who is one of the individuals in the US Senate who has been leading the charge in terms of acid rain abatement legislation, said, when we announced our regulation, that Ontario had done more in one day than the administration had done in five years to deal with the problem of acid rain.

When I go into the US and discuss with our American friends what we have done in Canada, there has not been criticism. The only criticism that has been forthcoming has been from the leader of the third party.

Mrs. Grier: I would like to remind the minister that if he has been reviewing Hansard for dates on which the issue of banking was raised in this House, it was the leader of my party who first raised it with him in December 1985 when he announced this program. The answer we got was, "There is going to be a select committee to review Countdown Acid Rain." It has taken us from December 1985 until January 1987 to persuade the minister to bring that committee forward and to get it going on its job, so I do not want any criticism in this House. If the minister is implying that he acts on things only when we raise questions, I think that is very true.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mrs. Grier: The question the minister is failing to answer is: how can he go the US and justify his criticisms of their lack of action on acid gas when banking is in the Ontario regulations? I think we would all like to hear a straight answer.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I simply say to the member for Lakeshore that the first criticism I

have heard of it is here in the Ontario Legislature and that, with the hint of an election in the air, it has suddenly become an issue of some interest to the leader of the third party.

I also am in the position of not wanting to pre-empt the select committee.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: No. If I were standing before this House announcing some action before the environment committee reported, they would say, "The minister is ignoring the environment committee."

I happen to be one person who believes in the committee system in this House and one person who believes that when a committee is given the responsibility to delve into an issue and come forward with the report, the courtesy that should be extended to that committee is to have it report and provide a suitable reaction to the committee's recommendations.

I am very interested. I was interested in their deliberations and watched them and had them monitored, so I am aware of some of the thoughts that came forward. I am pleased to receive that report and I will certainly be pleased to take into consideration all the recommendations that are before it.

1440

TIMBER-CUTTING LICENCE

Mr. O'Connor: I have a question for the Attorney General, who is here and who is listening. Last week, the cabinet awarded timber-cutting licences to the United Sawmill company, one of whose principals is the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) and also the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins). Given the history of this situation, I would like to ask the Attorney General whether the awarding of such a contract would be permitted under the conflict-of-interest guidelines and legislation set out in Bill 23, which is before the House?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I will be glad to examine the contract and let the honourable member know.

Mr. O'Connor: I am not sure I heard the answer, but if the answer was that he would let us know, I am somewhat shocked that the Attorney General does not know what his own legislation before this House says. Either such a contract is encompassed in the act, in which case it is most inappropriate for the cabinet to be awarding such a contract to one of its own back-bench members; or if it is not included, then I question the Attorney General as to why he is not bringing

forward this legislation for second reading. Is he delaying this legislation in order to allow this contract to be awarded before he brings it forward? Which one is it?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I really get the sense that the member does not need my answer to the question. He seems to have a good grip on the alternatives. His invitation is to have me look at the contract in question, which I will be glad to do and get back to him as quickly as I can.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question of the Minister of Labour. I am sure he is aware of the closure in our community of a plant called Sheller-Globe. In the accord that they signed with our party, he and his party promised that justification legislation and longer notice for plant closures as well as improved severance would be brought in.

Tom Hastings works at this place and has also worked for the past 11 years at Canadian Automotive Trim, which closed down, and for 15 years at Bendix, which closed down. Now he is at age 56 and has five years at Sheller-Globe and it is also closing down. Robert Gadd has also worked at JIC Electric, which closed down, for two years, and at Bendix, which closed down, for 10 years, and now at Sheller-Globe, and it is closing down. He is 37 and has a family of three.

When is the minister going to bring in the legislation that he promised, or was it all bafflegab? Did it mean nothing?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Obviously, the honourable gentleman has referred to a couple of individuals who work at Sheller-Globe and who have been unfortunate enough, previously in their working life, to have been victims. They really are the true victims of plant closure.

We are currently reviewing the options available to the government in all those areas. I can only promise that the legislative response from this government, which we have been working on for some period, will come forward at the appropriate time.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The appropriate time has long since passed. Why is it that in Ontario 21 people had to lock themselves in that plant in order to simply demand that the company give information on the profitability and the pension situation at the plant because management would not give it to them? When the company did not agree with that, last night at about two in the morning, 75 police officers in riot gear went after 21 employees, put them all in handcuffs, threw

them in the paddy wagon and charged them. Where is the fairness in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I share some of the concern of the member over this matter, so much so that I have asked, even as we move forward on legislation which will deal with these matters, both management and labour to come to Toronto tomorrow to meet with me so that some of the answers the parties want can be provided.

LEASE OF GOVERNMENT LAND

Mr. Callahan: I have a question for the acting Minister of Government Services. In my riding, there are 135 to 139 home lots where the present occupants did not take the opportunity to buy out the land leases. This is creating an administrative nightmare for the real estate agents in my riding, as well as vendors—that is why I suppose they support vendors as well—and the legal profession.

At present, the practice that prevails in the ministry is that in advance of listing a property a firm price or a firm appraisal is obtained from Ontario Housing and that is good for only 30 days. This has created a problem and the only way around it would be to put about four or five pages into an offer. Is there anything the government can do with reference to expanding that period?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank my honourable friend for his question. I can tell him that I have taken the matter up with my officials at the Ministry of Government Services. They tell me the rules of this situation have been made very clear to all the parties involved. We have, over the last number of years, effected some change. There was the opportunity, as the member knows, for individuals to buy out their lease. A number of individuals exercised that option; some did not. My officials tell me that was made very clear and the lawyers and realtors involved were equally apprised.

Having said all that, and recognizing the concern the honourable member and many of his constituents have, I am anxious to look at the situation to see whether there is perhaps some additional consideration we might give, but I want to make it clear that while we are obviously allowing individuals to capture their capital gain on the house, we intend to protect the public's interest in the leases and in the land.

Mr. Callahan: Can I inquire whether there might be provision for either a six-month period for closing or for a firm price, or the earlier of that or closing, whichever is the case?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would want to reflect upon that option. Not having the very considerable legal training of my friend the member for Brampton, I would want to reflect upon his suggestion and take it up with my officials, which I will do. I will report back to the member, who I repeat has had a very keen interest in seeing that justice is done on all sides in this important matter.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ADDICTION

Mr. Rowe: I have a question for the Minister of Health. On January 26, I asked the minister why he refused to provide the necessary funding to permit the Barrie detox centre to carry out much needed follow-up and long-term care for drug and alcohol abuse patients in my riding. In his response, the minister indicated that his government has made an incursion into the provision of better service for those with alcohol and drug addictions province-wide.

Can the minister tell us today what communities were awarded provincial government funds for new or expanded addiction services last year?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I cannot tell the honourable gentleman that at this moment; however, I do know a couple of interesting presentations were made that covered parts of the ridings of the member for Cornwall (Mr. Guindon) and the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve). I do not have the list, but will make it available to the honourable gentleman as soon as I can get that material together.

Mr. Rowe: Perhaps we can refresh the minister's memory. Of the \$3.4 million allocation, 73 per cent or \$2.5 million went to Liberal-held ridings in the province. In fact, the minister invested more than \$100,000 in his own riding of Huron-Bruce. Simcoe county has one of the highest rates of drug and alcohol abuse in the province. Can the minister tell me today when he is going to stop feathering his own nest and the nests of his cabinet cronies and start looking after the people who need his help the most?

1450

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable gentleman will want to know that we also provided major funding for projects like the Renascent Treatment Centre here in Ontario. We also provided major funding for projects in Timmins and we provided major funding for a number of other projects that reach right around the province.

I can tell my friend that he would not have been incorrect if he had said that some areas of the province had long been forgotten by the previous administration. There are requirements to put in

place the first programs that have ever been put in for some of those areas, and we will strive to do the best we can to spread out the activities of the people who are providing addiction services for both alcoholic and drug-addicted patients.

There is more to be done and more must be done. In fact, one of the things that concerns me and has concerned me for a long time, and one of the things that has been very advantageous as a result of the throne speech, has been the decision to put a committed program together to fund addictions programs for the youth of this province of ours. I am sure the people of this province will be quite pleased to see the initiatives that will be coming forward.

Mr. Speaker: The Leader of the Opposition. I do not see the two ministers.

Mr. Grossman: We have been informed that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) is not going to attend. He may be with the Premier (Mr. Peterson) announcing the name of the new domed stadium. In the absence of both of them, I have another question.

NUCLEAR SAFETY

Mr. Grossman: My question is for the Solicitor General. As minister responsible for nuclear emergencies, can the Solicitor General tell us when he and the Ontario Provincial Police each were first notified of the fire at the Bruce nuclear station last Friday?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: In answer to the question, it is perhaps wise to look quickly at the very background of the fire at the Bruce station. It was at the Bruce A station. All units have been shut down for a month now because of maintenance going on in the vacuum building located at the top of the facility which provides containment for any air that might feasibly escape.

During the maintenance of that, caulking that was being used for the seams came on fire because of the heating treatment it was receiving. Therefore, a quick assessment was made by the staff on site at the moment it happened. It was a very small fire covering six square feet of space and was put out immediately after the evacuation of people. They returned to full working within two hours.

Mr. Grossman: I must say it is a little unusual for a minister consciously to avoid answering a question and thus put the onus on us to restate the question, which I now will do.

Regardless of the minister's attempt to downplay the situation, he will have to admit that there was at all times an extreme amount of radioactive material in the building in which there was a fire.

He will have to acknowledge that it was at least serious enough for all the workers to be evacuated. He will know very well of the proximity to the town of Kincardine and hundreds and thousands of other people.

My simple question to the minister, to which this House and the people of Kincardine deserve the answer, is, as Solicitor General, the minister responsible for nuclear emergencies in this province, when was he first notified of the fire and when was the OPP first notified of the fire?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: To reiterate, as the member knows, these types of matters are dealt with by a member of the Atomic Energy Control Board who was on site at the time of the fire. They were aware of all the proceedings that went on at that very moment. Since it did not involve anything nuclear-related, but was a small industrial fire of caulking material, there was no occasion to make any further notification beyond their forces who took it out and the AECB people. My own officials are currently visiting with Ontario Hydro to determine any other causes.

Mr. Grossman: I can only deduce from the answer the minister has twice attempted to give that in fact he was not officially notified on Friday, the day of the fire, was not notified on Saturday and was not notified on Sunday. I speculate that as the minister responsible for nuclear emergencies, he was notified by this morning's Toronto Sun which carried the first report of this fire in a nuclear station.

At the time of Chernobyl, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) appropriately made a grand statement in this House indicating, and I quote from April 30, 1986, that these incidents will "cause a reassessment of safety procedures and safety systems and designs. I wish to assure the House that those ministries and agencies in this province with responsibilities for nuclear safety will be working closely together for the next few months...to learn and apply whatever lessons there may be from...Chernobyl."

Is the Solicitor General, as the minister responsible for nuclear safety, satisfied that a fire may occur in a nuclear station and he would never be notified? Is he satisfied when the local officials and the OPP are not notified? Is he satisfied with those procedures? Are those safety procedures that he and the Minister of Natural Resources approved pursuant to that April 30 statement? If so, how does he justify that total dereliction of responsibility to the people of Kincardine?

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The safety of all individuals, citizens of the area, plant workers, etc., is always foremost in the minds of the people who work at Hydro and AECB, as well as at our emergency measures office. Therefore, there is always an ongoing dialogue between those officials to review whether procedures have been appropriate.

Today, as well, there is an ongoing debate between those three groups to determine whether correct procedures are in place or whether there is any need for revisions of those procedures.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: Mr. Speaker, I am intrigued, as I am sure you are, by the battle going on in the last few days between the Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberal Party to see who is doing the most to protect the insurance industry. I want to put a question from a different perspective, that of protecting the motorists and, therefore, I want to put it to the Minister of Financial Institutions.

It is becoming increasingly obvious to anyone in this House and, I think, to those outside that he does not know what he has done, what he is going to do and what he is doing with regard to insurance. In the last month, he has contradicted everything he said in the two years before that and half the things he has said since then. All we know is that whatever he is doing, it is going to cost the motorist more.

Why has the minister refused to seek out a more efficient, less costly auto insurance system, similar to our Ontario health insurance plan system? Does he not know that the total expenses of the operation of OHIP now consume only two per cent of total disbursements, compared to 30 per cent when health insurance was under the private system? Why does he not look at that public model for auto insurance and give the same kind of savings to the motorists of the province as they get in health insurance?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that we have looked at all systems. We have Justice Coulter Osborne examining all systems with respect to no-fault insurance. We feel that the recommendations I brought forward on April 23 will go the way towards resolving the problems we have.

Mr. Swart: I remind the minister that he has refused to look at the public plans in the three western provinces. He went to England, Switzerland and other European countries at public expense to look at their plans, but he refused to

go to Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

Given that the minister is simply playing defence for the private insurance companies and trying to protect his own political backside while skating around the real issue, does he not realize that he has to have the savings of a public, nonprofit system—a reduction of 20 per cent on premiums for administration alone, as pointed out by Woods Gordon, and the return of all income on investment amounting to another 15 per cent—to bring about real and substantial reduction for motorists and that there is no other way of doing it?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member constantly refers to his much-vaunted colleagues in the west. He never once mentions the fact that the Manitoba system is in deficit to the tune of about \$53 million, including its reinsurance obligations. That is a direct charge against the taxpayers in Manitoba.

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Revenue. As he is undoubtedly well aware, the home owners in Metropolitan Toronto are anxiously awaiting the release of the market value assessment impact study.

Last week, I asked the minister when he expected that the ministry study would be released. He said, in two words, "Very soon." I understand the report has not been released as yet. Will the minister tell us what he meant by "very soon"? Is that by the end of this week? By the end of May? By the end of June, or perhaps in due course by the end of this decade? When does the minister expect the study will be released and made available?

1500

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I meant, without the lapse of very much time.

Mr. McFadden: I would have to say that is the model of inexactitude, and that is parliamentary language.

Mr. Speaker: Very Churchillian.

Mr. McFadden: When I asked the minister when this report would be released, I asked whether he would be prepared to release the report to this House and to the public. In answer to my question, he said that it would be released to Metro council and then it would be up to Metro council to decide the disposition of the ministry's study.

In view of the fact that this study has been carried out at the expense of the taxpayers of Ontario and that it impacts very directly on the homes of every single taxpayer in the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, will the minister take the position that Metro should release it? And if Metro does not release it, will he undertake to release the study to this House and to the public so that the people know what is going to happen to their homes?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the honourable member would know the study does not deal with individual properties by street address. Even the member, who may be very concerned about the assessment on his palatial residence in north Toronto, would not be able to determine what the exact change would be. They are done by properties in areas, in order to give the elected municipal politicians an understanding of overall impact; that is what an impact study is, as the member knows.

All the other things the member has said in this connection have some validity. The cost of the program was paid from provincial funds, but it was at the request of the Metropolitan council. The report will be delivered to them soon, and I hope that means the member will not have to ask me too many more times about it. It really is their report in that sense; I hope and trust it will be considered a public document and made public. I believe that is a decision in which they should be involved.

I also want to tell the member and anybody else who will read the Hansard he will be sending out, up and down the byways of Eglinton riding, that it does not refer to specific properties but only to general areas of the city. It is an excellent report, I believe, and will be available to the Metropolitan council soon.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. He tells us we need 100,000 new day care spaces, which is an underestimate, but he seems determined to fly in the face of near-unanimous public submissions to both federal and provincial legislative committees, determined to provide direct public funding to profit-making day care centres. I wonder whether he would tell us what conditions and what methods of ensuring public accountability he plans to attach to the tax moneys he is going to be funnelling to profit-making centres.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: It is precisely because we need so many more additional spaces in the province that I have indicated on several

occasions that we cannot afford to lose any of the spaces we have now. I have made it very clear, in public statements and in speaking to the private day care operators, that the only way they would get any public dollars in the form about which the member is speaking is if, first, they commit themselves to use that money to increase salaries and/or to reduce fees in combination; and second, that they would be prepared to open their books so we could determine that, in fact, that it is the way it is going to be used. My understanding is and the feedback I get is that they are agreeable to that.

Ms. Gigantes: The minister has complained bitterly about the federal plans for development of day care, but he has got himself entangled in those federal plans because he is insistent on giving money to profit-making day care centres. Can he tell us whether he would be willing to say to profit-making day care centres, "Unless you incorporate as nonprofit centres, we are not going to give you direct public funding"? We cannot hold them accountable for that funding and we have the proof in the nursing home system.

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I would suggest to the honourable member that I have not complained bitterly about the federal process, I have simply indicated that there are some things we would like to do; for example, introduce income testing in Ontario, but we could only do it for half the system if we played by the existing rules. I would like those rules changed.

With respect to the specific question the member raised, I have already indicated that I am quite prepared to include in our overall proposal incentives to private day care operators to convert to nonprofit. Again, I have spoken to a number of them privately and indicated some of the things we are prepared to do and tried to get some feedback from them as to what kinds of incentives would be acceptable. I am quite prepared to take a look at that. I have no objection at all to providing incentives for them to go nonprofit.

ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Education. In January, the minister made a somewhat spontaneous announcement that he would be requiring boards of education across the province to provide courses of study in the acquired immune deficiency syndrome virus. I wonder if the minister could tell us what resources he has made available to these boards

to undertake the development of these courses of study and training programs for staff members.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I thank the honourable member for his question. I did indicate that the government views the AIDS phenomenon as a very serious medical and social concern. We see the role of education as important in addressing that concern.

I indicated some weeks ago that we would be amending our health and physical education guideline for students, particularly in the secondary years, so that at some point in that process between grade 7 and the end of the secondary panel, students would take instruction in this particularly important area. I expect that guideline will be in place for the 1987 fall term.

In the preparation of those materials, we are working with groups such as the Ontario Public Education Panel on AIDS and many others in the health and education community. If the member would like further details, I will be very happy to supply those to him at a very early time.

Mr. Andrewes: The minister will know that often the responsibility for teaching sexuality to young people in schools falls to public health nurses who are employed by the local boards of health. I wonder if the minister is aware that in Niagara region, for instance, the Niagara regional health services department proposes to make services available to some 11,000 grade 8 and grade 9 students in the Niagara area but needs a commitment of \$400,000 per year in order to undertake this program.

Has the Minister of Education consulted with his colleague the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) about making available additional resources, funding, to the local boards of health in order that they may undertake this somewhat important role?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Again, I want to say to my friend the member for Lincoln that I have taken the advice of my friend the Minister of Health, who has been very positive in his advice in this respect. I should indicate as well to my friend from Lincoln that, as he knows, it will be up to local school boards to implement the specific programs within the broad framework of the provincial educational policy that we are going to mandate.

It is important to know that local boards which have every regard to local community concern and sensitivity, together with educational and health care professionals, will implement a program in this area. To do that, I expect they will take the advice of and work with groups such as health units and others who have a real interest

and commitment to ensuring that this very important objective is met within our school system.

PLANT CLOSURE

Mr. McClellan: I hoped the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) might be here for at least part of this question, but I will put it to the Minister of Labour since it concerns this morning's announcement that Canadian General Electric intends to close its Lansdowne Avenue plant.

Given that Canadian General Electric has closed 14 plants in the city of Toronto over the past 15 years with a total job loss in excess of 8,000 jobs, what happened this morning is simply the final chapter in the elimination of one of the major industries in the city of Toronto and one of the major sources of jobs for the people of west Toronto.

When does the minister intend to honour the promises made by the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to bring in legislation to set up a process of public justification and review before companies such as Canadian General Electric close their doors and walk away on millions of dollars' worth of capital investment, to say nothing of the jobs of many thousands of workers?

1510

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I indicated earlier to the honourable member's colleague the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke) that we continue to have, and have had for a number of months now, discussions in terms of termination and severance pay. In terms of legislation that might help to avoid these plant closures, the gentleman will know that the throne speech spoke of an industrial restructuring commissioner. It is my expectation that the government will be moving in the next short while to put that process in place.

Mr. McClellan: I was hoping the Minister of the Environment would be back, but I will put the question to the Minister of Labour since I hope there has been some discussion about the future of that site.

The minister will know that the Lansdowne Avenue plant of Canadian General Electric is one of the major repositories of polychlorinated biphenyl contamination in Ontario. I think there are 10,000 square yards of PCB-contaminated, oil-soaked soil sitting inside the main assembly buildings. The site itself is one of the largest PCB wells anywhere in the world and there are dozens and dozens of drums full of PCBs stored on the site.

Since this site is slated to become a classy shopping boutique—perhaps it will be called PCB Place; I do not know—perhaps the minister can share what plans have been made with his colleague for the decontamination of this very large and dangerous industrial site. I am sure the people of the area will be interested in knowing what the government's plans are.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: In his first question, the gentleman indicated the announcement was made only this morning. The member has asked a very important question. I will raise the matter and direct that question to the Minister of the Environment as soon as I see him and he will report to the House on any appropriate response.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. Dean: I have a question for the Minister of Health. For some time now, St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton has been attempting to obtain provincial approval and funding for the long-planned, east end ambulatory care centre. The Ministry of Health has finally approved a budget of \$15 million that had been submitted in 1983, but the ministry is refusing to adjust that budget to take into account the effect of inflation, which has raised the estimated cost of the care centre to \$17 million. Will the minister tell us why it is his ministry's policy to prolong the approval process for vital projects and then turn around and refuse to adjust the budget to reflect rising costs?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not know why there would have been a long delay before 1985. That is a question about which he will be more familiar than I. I can tell the honourable member, however, that I am always concerned when people bring to my attention concerns about escalating costs. People in the Hamilton area, the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie), the member for Hamilton Centre (Ms. Munro), the member for Wentworth North (Mr. Ward) and others have brought this to my attention and I am pleased the member is also bringing it to my attention. I will take a look at what is currently being done and what can be done because I know the high level of community interest in this project, but I am not in a position to tell him why it took his government so long to decide upon the approval procedure.

Mr. Dean: The minister has given an answer to a question he may have wished people would ask, but that was not the question that was asked. Incidentally, I am pleased he has heard from other people on this but I have not seen that issuing in any action.

Will the minister give to us and the people of my riding in east Hamilton and Stoney Creek where this centre is to be located, who have long anticipated the completion of this ambulatory care centre, his assurance that he will clear the bureaucratic logjam that there appears to be in his ministry and confirm the decision of the previous Progressive Conservative government, which I am glad he brought up and which was made two years ago, that appropriate funding and final approval will be given to this extremely important project? Can he confirm that without delay?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I do not think I recall what appropriate funding decisions were made by the previous administration, the name of which I have forgotten at this time. However, I will look into what decisions were made some two years ago, as he has indicated, and I will report to him about what decisions were made and what plans were then approved at the various levels of government. In my review of the Ministry of Health, it came to my attention that a very large number of announcements and approvals were given based on very scanty planning. In fact, there were very few approvals at other levels of government.

I will be only too pleased to advise the honourable member and perhaps refresh his memory about the manner in which the decision may ultimately have been taken some two or more years ago.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Treasurer in his guise as the acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet. I wrote to the acting Chairman of the Management Board on February 27 and pointed out to him that while the government had brought in and passed its so-called residential rent review guideline of 5.2 per cent, more or less, the Management Board of Cabinet had just passed a memo raising the rents for government-owned residential properties in northern Ontario by as much as 12.8 per cent per year over the next five years. I have yet to find out why this is happening and whether this government is going to live up to the spirit of the law, even if it is not subject to the letter of the law.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I will be glad to get some more detailed information for the honourable member, but as I recall the situation to which he refers, these are government-provided facilities for the Ontario Provincial Police, conservation officers and others. They are relatively heavily subsidized. At the time we saw the actual rents

charged, we thought it was appropriate to have a makeup provision to bring the rents somewhere into the range of rents paid by other people in the community. Since this was some months ago, I would prefer, having given my recollection, to provide the member with some more detailed information and I would be glad if he chose to pursue it by additional questions.

Mr. Wildman: The minister may recall that when the previous government first brought in rent review, the then minister Margaret Scrivener went through this same process and had to back down, follow the spirit of the law and bring down the rents the government was raising for these. Does the minister not realize that the subsidized rents are a way of attracting qualified OPP officers and Ministry of Natural Resources and other ministry staff to small, isolated communities in the north? By raising rents to market levels, against the guideline, he is taking away that incentive and making it more difficult for us to get qualified public servants to move into small municipalities in northern Ontario.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am quite flattered to be compared with the former minister, but I take what the member said as something of a warning and I will provide him with the specific information he seeks in that connection.

HOSPITAL BEDS

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Health. Specifically, I am concerned about the matter with respect to the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital and the allocation of chronic and acute care beds for Halton region. The minister is aware that he has made three separate announcements of these 90 acute and chronic care beds. He has been sitting, in his ministry, with a recommendation from the Halton District Health Council for five solid months. Will the minister announce the allocation of those badly needed chronic and acute care beds?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The honourable member knows that the Halton DHC was one of the earliest to respond to my request for information. The other health councils had more difficult decisions to make, although I appreciate that the Halton decision also took an awful lot of work. We got some replies from some health councils late in February and we now are putting together the entire package, as I told the member for Simcoe Centre (Mr. Rowe). Those arrangements now are in place in terms of making our final decisions. As soon as we have something to announce or indicate to the public, of course the proper announcements will be made. I have no

announcements to make today, and although the member probably hoped I would I am unable to comply with his wishes.

1520

PETITION DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: I wish to table a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

It is signed by 141 persons bringing the total now—Mr. Speaker, you have been waiting to hear the latest total—to 1,476 and growing daily.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Knight from the select committee on the environment presented the committee's report and moved the adoption of its recommendations.

Mr. Knight: As the members know, the committee was instructed to review and report its recommendations on bilateral environmental issues as they affect Ontario. At our organizational meeting we decided our first report would be a review of the Countdown Acid Rain program. We decided that in subsequent recesses during this parliament, we would also look at Niagara River toxic waste management, Great Lakes water quality and toxic rain.

During this past recess, we held 11 days of public hearings and listened to the presentations of 56 people. As a result, the committee has several recommendations to make. There are three I would like to highlight: first, the banking provisions for Ontario Hydro should be deleted from the regulations and not be replaced with any similar provision; second, public hearings should be held by a designated committee of the Legislative Assembly to review the final progress reports to be submitted by Inco, Falconbridge, Algoma Steel and Ontario Hydro before December 1988; third, the Environmental Protection Act should be amended to include a notice-and-comment procedure.

On motion by Mr. Knight, the debate was adjourned.

MOTIONS

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that Miss Stephenson and Mr. Dean exchange places in the order of precedence for private members' public business.

Motion agreed to.

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the select committee on health be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Wednesday, May 13, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the standing committee on the Ombudsman be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Tuesday, May 19, 1987, and in the morning of Wednesday, May 20, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. McClellan moved first reading of Bill 45, An Act to amend the Workers' Compensation Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. McClellan: The purpose of this bill is to amend the Workers' Compensation Act by repealing section 86n. Section 86n empowers the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Board to direct the appeals tribunal to reconsider its decisions to hold hearings, to review the decisions of the appeals tribunal and even to stay or cancel the execution or implementation of decisions of the appeals tribunal. This would prevent the board from trying to sabotage decision 72.

WINDSOR YOUTH MARCHING AND CONCERT BAND ACT

Mr. Newman moved first reading of Bill Pr68, An Act respecting the Windsor Youth Marching and Concert Band.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the

Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the Session.

Mr. Baetz: At throne speech debate time, I believe it is protocol or tradition, if one so desires, to compliment the Speaker for the good work he is doing. Even if it is not protocol and is not tradition, although as I say I think it is, I would like personally to compliment the Speaker for the very excellent manner in which he has conducted this session, always with good humour and fairness. We appreciate it very much.

I would like to be able to extend the same kind of complimentary sentiments to the Lieutenant Governor and to the government for the throne speech, but in all honesty I am afraid I cannot do that. In this throne speech, as we all know, we have seen an unprecedented length. I believe it is the longest throne speech in the history of this province. It has also been unprecedented in flabber-gabbery in an effort to catch votes. "Here a vote, there a vote, everywhere a vote vote." That is the feeling one gets as one goes through this speech.

We realize that throne speeches are not budget speeches. They are not expected to spell out the government's program in detail with accompanying expenditures. We know that is not expected from a throne speech. However, what we can expect in a throne speech is at least an outline of the philosophies and principles that are going to be guiding the government's program in the session ahead. When one looks for these general guidelines, one cannot help but feel terribly disappointed; indeed, feel terribly confused as to what this is all about.

I could address and attack many sections of the throne speech with a great deal of validity, but I am going to confine myself to one issue and that is the issue of child care. Here, as much as and probably more so than in many of the other sectors of the throne speech, there is nothing but confusion and confused talk, a spirit of: "On the one hand, but on the other hand. If we say this, how many votes will we get? If we say that, how many will we lose? We will say a little on this side and a little on that side and we will all go running around the maypole."

It is very interesting indeed that the throne speech uses "child care" and restricts it to a discussion of the economics of child care. As we have noted in the speech from the throne, it says at the very outset, "The absence of an adequate supply of quality, affordable child care may be the single greatest obstacle preventing many families from realizing their full economic

potential." It deals with the economics of child care or the economics of the lack of child care.

1530

Sure, there are economic dimensions to inadequate child care. We know that. We realize that in many families there are two income earners because there have to be. They have to have two incomes to make a living. We know that in single-parent families it is either a case of adequate child care and the single parent can go out to work or it is welfare. We realize there are these economic aspects to child care, but for the throne speech to come out and to restrict its treatment of this very important issue to the economics illustrates more eloquently than anyone else could say it that—

Interjection.

Mr. Baetz: Thank you. I see the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is about to leave. I will send him this speech. I am sure he will learn by it.

Mr. Andrewes: He is very interested in child care.

Mr. Baetz: Yes, he is, or should be, will be—is.

Child care is a social issue. It is today the single most important social issue facing our society. It is more than an economic issue.

I believe the current critical situation is largely due to the fact that public attitudes and public policies and programs simply have not kept pace with some of the rapid and profound social changes in Canadian society.

Paramount among these changes are at least three. The first one is the sharply increased participation in the labour force by women, and particularly mothers with very young children. I am not going to elaborate that mountain of statistics and figures that paint an overwhelming and compelling story about the lack of and the need for more child care. The figures are all there.

I want to cite only one here, and that is simply that in 1976, 31 per cent of all mothers with children under three were full-time participants in the labour force. That figure has now gone up to 45 per cent; 45 per cent of all mothers with very young children, children under three, are today in the labour force. That is the first major change that has occurred in our society and that requires society to respond to it.

The second social change is the increase in the number of single-parent families, single parents under the age of 35. In 1951, 14 per cent of all families were single-parent. By 1981, 28 per cent of all families were single-parent families. That

is the second major change that has affected child care.

The third is the sharp current and, above all, projected long-term decline in birth rates, leading to zero or negative population change within a decade.

These are some of the forces that have impacted and that require us to change our strategy as far as child care is concerned.

To do this properly, as a government, we have to be very clear about our principles. We have to be very clear about our objectives. My favourite modern American philosopher, Yogi Berra of New York Yankees fame, said, "If you don't know where you are going, you are liable to end up somewhere else." I think this is what we have to be aware of here in developing a comprehensive child care program. We have to know where we are going or, as Yogi warns us, we may end up somewhere else.

I believe child care programs and public policy should be based on the following principles. I would like to talk about principles. That is where we start and then we can translate the principles into some operational and programmatic questions.

The first principle is that public policies and programs, if they are to be fair and equitable for all parents with young children, must address the child care issue in a broad and comprehensive manner rather than in a fragmented and a partial one.

This broad approach will encompass all categories and all types of child care, from care given by parents to their own children in the parental home on the one hand, to care obtained by parents for their children through a wide variety of formal and informal arrangements on the other. You cannot look at the question of child care without including all parents and all children, whether they look after them in their own home or whether they purchase or get the service in some other kind of way.

The throne speech says absolutely nothing about parental care in one's own home, and that is not a comprehensive approach to child care. It is certainly not a statement befitting a throne speech. There is absolutely no mention of any kind of measure or program for parents who choose to stay in their own home and look after their own children.

One sentence in the throne speech stated that child care in the future will be a public service, not a welfare service. What does that mean? Does it mean there is no more income testing, no more needs testing? I think we should disregard

the needs test but go for income testing. What does public service really mean? Does it mean we are now going to embark on having a broad network of child care services comparable to our educational system? I wish the throne speech had elaborated on this a little more; it would have helped all of us. The point is, it seems to look at only one side. It is a bifurcated, myopic view of child care.

The second principle I would like to refer to is the principle that parents have primary responsibility for the care and nurturing of their young children, and that role must be maintained and strengthened by public policies and public programs. The role of government should be essentially an enabling one, assisting parents through a wide range of measures, whether in one-parent or two-parent families, to carry out their parental responsibilities. The second principle, then, is an enabling role for government.

The third principle, and it is consistent with the role of government as an enabling one, is that public programs should not be assumed to cover the entire cost of child care, except in the provision of adequate care for children in extreme cases of complete family breakdown.

The next principle is consistent with parents maintaining the primary responsibility for the care of their children. Public policies and programs should be designed to give parents the greatest possible practical range of choices as to how, where and from whom their children will receive care. This assumes that care outside the parental home is accessible and affordable and that care by the parents themselves in the parental home is financially feasible.

We can talk as long as the day is long about giving parents a choice, but if we do not provide some kind of financial support, some kind of assistance, we can very easily narrow that choice to one or two methods. Parents must be given a wide range of choice.

It is this range of choice that distinguishes our kind of free, democratic, parliamentary society from the totally planned socialist state. The totally planned socialist state will tell you your children will be looked after, and they are. They are looked after very well outside the home, but you have no choice about looking after your own children inside your home. We, in this society, feel that parents should have their choice as to whether the care is to take place outside or inside the home.

Another principle is that child care assistance provided by governments, whether in the form of direct cash payments or indirect subsidies or

services, should be based on the principle of selectivity, which simply means giving most help to those who need it most. That has to be a central principle as we look at our total child care delivery system.

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A further principle, and this is somewhat in line with the selectivity principle, is that the most help be given when it is needed most. It is estimated that this takes place in the first two years of a child's life. The behavioural scientists, the social scientists or the medical scientists like to talk about these first two years as being so absolutely important for the healthy growth and development of the child. They talk about it as being the period of bonding and attachment, a period when the child begins to attach, when it begins to feel at home in a certain environment, when it begins to relate very strongly to supportive adults. If that does not happen, the future of that child, the emotional growth of that child is in enormous jeopardy.

If we do not give the proper care in these first two years, we are really building hundreds of thousands of human time bombs who will go off somewhere down the line as they get older. They will go off as sure as night follows day. After having neglected the kids during these very young, formative years, the first two years particularly—we neglect them, we give them no love, we give them no care; we may give a glance once in a while, but no meaningful care—later on, when they are 15, 17, 18 or 25 years old, they begin to act out on society. They begin to be hostile to their best friends, parents, siblings and neighbours. Then society throws up its hands and says: "What is wrong with Mary and Jane? Why are they so belligerent? Why are they such ugly people?" They are simply giving back to society what they got when they were very young. That is what they give back.

We should not be surprised. We have to be particularly anxious and careful that in the first two years adequate care is given to the child.

Another principle, again in keeping with the nature of our free enterprise, welfare state system—and that is what we are in, a free enterprise, entrepreneurial system, with a mix of the welfare state. This principle is consistent with that kind of society and also with the principle of wide choice; that is, that licensed day care centres under the auspices of private, commercial operators should be allowed to continue to organize and administer child care service, along with and alongside the not-for-profit agencies. This should be regarded as a privilege, one that

would be withdrawn if and when these privately sponsored child care services provide a service that is consistently lower than those of the not-for-profit agencies and-or do not otherwise meet the stringent standards established by government for child care.

In the province over the years we have built an excellent, high-standard child care system, thanks to such founders of the system as Elsie Stapleford—a name that perhaps not many people in this chamber here today recognize—certainly one of the great builders of our child care system, and Bessie Touzel, who was honoured with the Order of Ontario the other day.

We have here a system of high-standard child care. It does not mean there is no room for improvement. We can always improve the standards, and must, but certainly I see a place for the for-profit, private entrepreneurs in this field, provided these people deliver a high-quality service for their children and do it as well as the not-for-profits do it.

I know our socialist friends down here do not like it. We heard it in question period again today, "Why do you allow these awful commercial operators in the child care field at all?" Profit to them is the dirtiest six-letter word in the English language; they do not like it.

Mr. Warner: Making money off kids; making money off the sick and old people too.

Mr. Baetz: That got them going.

We are here in a mixed society of private enterprise and the social welfare state.

Mr. Warner: Any time you can grab a bit, it does not matter whom you get it from or how you get it.

Mr. Baetz: The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere will get the floor later on, Madam Speaker. He can then repeat his treatise on this subject.

I would simply like to ask my socialist friends, who say there is absolutely no room for the profit motive in the child care field, what about the Fisher Price toys? Are they not a good thing for the children of today? Do the children not learn by these toys? Are they not far superior to anything that has been created before? I am not doing a commercial here for Fisher Price; I am sure there are other toymakers in the business.

Is Gerber Baby Foods in the business only because it loves the children or does it also have a profit motive? I suspect it has a profit motive and a love for kids, and as a result, the kids get excellent baby food.

One could talk about the Huggies and the Luvs and the Pampers. There is far better quality there

today than there was years and years ago, because the manufacturers, who, I suspect, operate on a mixed motive of profit and the wellbeing of the children, have produced a very excellent-quality thing there.

Mr. Gregory: That is the bottom line.

Mr. Baetz: That is the bottom line, my good colleague the member for Mississauga East reminds me.

The fact is that the private entrepreneur, if regulated—and we do regulate; we regulate the kinds of toys they can make and we regulate what they put in baby foods. We can regulate, and I think, frankly, if we have this mix of the social state and the entrepreneur, we have the best of both worlds. The principle here should be that there is a role for the profit operators.

As we know from talking to many of them, and some of them having shown us their accounts, they are not making enormous profits on this thing at all. Some people would like to say they are making millions, which of course is a lot of nonsense.

Finally, I think there is a principle here too, again thinking of the kind of society we are in, that government intervention through laws, regulations and actual programs cannot be all things to all people. It cannot be the only actor in the child care field. It cannot do it and it would not even be appropriate for a government to serve in that role.

What we need in this province and in this country for the adequate development of our child care system and child care, however it takes place, whether it is formal or informal, is, first of all, a better and a greater public awareness of the needs for better child care services, but also to get more people participating in it: friends, families, neighbours, informal and formal community organizations and, of course, employers.

The final principle in devising a child care program, I think, is that financial assistance to parents of young families should be given in a manner that is as unobtrusive as possible in the private lives of families without violating the principles of public accountability in the expenditure of public funds. There we are into the question of the needs test versus the income test. Many people agree that the needs test is too intrusive, that it delves into the private affairs and lives of the family more than it needs to in order to provide accountability for the expenditure of public funds.

Here there are about 10 principles, none of them enunciated, not even hinted at in this throne speech. Almost a year ago we were given a great

fanfare that in some future throne speech, presumably this one this year, we would get a beautiful outline and a statement of principles and objectives for child care from this government. Instead of that, we got nothing.

Based on these principles, I would like to refer to a few operational steps we could be taking that are consistent with any one of these principles or any combination or maybe all of them. Here are some specific program recommendations I would like to make. This is not a policy statement of my party, these are my own personal views; for the time being, at least.

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The first is that there be a federal tax credit of \$500 for every child two years and under and a \$300 credit for every child aged two to five years where they are cared for in their own homes and where no other child care expenses are claimed. In the report from the special parliamentary committee, they were referring to an immediate federal child tax credit of \$200 for the first child, \$100 for the second child and \$50 for the third child. This government harrumphed. They said, "What is a \$200 federal tax subsidy?"

Mr. Gregory: What did they do?

Mr. Baetz: They harrumphed. They said: "This is ridiculous. This does not amount to a thing." I agree it is not enough, but this throne speech did not even talk about it, did not even mention it. It had nothing whatever to say to those parents, and there are many of them, who want to look after their own children in their own homes; for them, nothing, certainly not as far as the throne speech is concerned. That is why I am recommending that we look at the possibility of a \$500 tax credit for every child under two—that is the most vulnerable age group—and a \$300 credit for every child aged two to five.

Second, and this is where we will be looking to this government for some action, these federal tax credits should be matched by an Ontario tax credit of equal amount. These tax credits, which would then amount to \$1,000 for a child under two and \$600 for a child from two to five through a combination of federal and provincial tax credits, are still not enough. We know that. It is still not enough to replace the lost income of a mother who stays home to look after her young child. But if members will remember, we have stated as one of our principles that it is not incumbent upon government to pay for all the child care costs. We can assist but we do not carry the whole load.

Certainly, it would be at least a start in a very specific way towards recognizing the value of

those parents, and usually it is the mother who leaves the labour force temporarily to stay at home and look after her children. It would be a recognition of that value. It would not compensate for their losses; I know that. That would be one recommendation.

I feel we should also support the proposal of the special House of Commons committee on child care, which was to the effect that all working parents with children enrolled in licensed day care be eligible for a tax credit of up to 30 per cent of expenses but not more than \$3,000 per child, to a maximum of \$12,000 per family. That is the financial assistance recommendation, and I think it is good one, for those parents who choose to purchase their child care outside.

Keep in mind that the tax credit, which could go up to \$1,000 for the child under two, is for parents who do not claim any other compensation from government for child care expenses. That first credit was for those who look after their own children.

Third, I would say that the matched federal-provincial government capital and startup grants should be restricted to nonprofit licensed facilities, it being assumed that private operators would provide their own startup capital. They will get direct operating grants, as the minister has already said, but it is assumed that if you are a private entrepreneur you will not be looking to government to give you startup capital; you will be finding that yourself in the private sector.

The next recommendation is that the matched federal-provincial governments' direct operating grants go to nonprofit and commercial day care centres and that these grants be targeted to increase the salaries and the quality of child care staff.

For many of us who have been looking at the child care question, particularly the kind of child care that is provided in licensed group homes, the one thing that strikes us is the very shabby level of staff salaries. I think everybody who looks at them cannot help but be persuaded that those salaries are really too low. As a result of this, there is a lot of staff turnover and low staff morale, all of which is very disruptive, almost destructive, for the children in their care.

As has been pointed out, we pay our child care workers a lot less than we pay the workers in the zoo who feed the animals. As a nation, as a society, we have to correct our value system a bit on this one. Certainly, we could increase the salaries up to a reasonable level. Heaven knows it is not going to be a very high professional salary, but at least it will increase these salaries

somewhat to the point where the workers are not going to be looking day after day at where they may turn next, to leave the child care field or to go to another agency. That is something we should be looking at in an operational way.

Another recommendation is that the needs test approach to determine the ability of parents to pay for day care costs be replaced by the less intrusive income testing and that the level of ceilings for family income eligible to receive some subsidies be increased to provide at least some financial help to medium-income families.

Right now, there are families with medium incomes who are not eligible under the needs test and who might not even be eligible under an income test. If they are to purchase their child care from outside the home, they should receive at least some assistance. I think we can do much better at that than we have in the past.

Parents eligible for subsidies based on the income test should be given the choice of having their children attend either a profit or a nonprofit licensed day care centre. We should not tie the hands of the parents. If we are going to say, "Your income is low enough that you are eligible to receive some assistance," we should let the parents choose whether they want to send their children to a commercial day care centre or a community nonprofit centre.

After all, we must assume that the parents have some common sense about this, that they have some sense of responsibility for their children. Why should we skew their decision and say, "If you want a subsidy from us, you cannot send your child off to that commercial day care centre"? It might be right across the street from where they live, whereas the community centre one might be four or five miles away. I think we should leave that up to the parents.

Another specific recommendation is that the current unpaid maternity leave—the leave period is up to 17 weeks now—be increased gradually to 26 weeks and that the unemployment insurance cash benefits be increased to 90 per cent of the wages. That, too, was something the special federal committee recommended. I think these mandatory leaves should be extended gradually from 17 weeks up to 26 weeks. It gives the mothers, and maybe the fathers in some cases, the possibility of staying home and still having their jobs protected.

Beyond the law, beyond the legislation that would make this mandatory in cases where the parents wanted it, I would hope that, through a public awareness program, more and more employers could work out voluntary arrange-

ments. We do not need to have laws, rules and regulations on every coming and going in society. We need to assume that employers want to do the right thing by their employees, by those who have young children. In many ways, these things can be worked out in a unique, very intimate way, rather than depending on some massive comprehensive piece of legislation that might not match every little occasion or situation.

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I would also recommend that both the federal and provincial governments provide some tax write-offs to those employers who will provide child care facilities at the place of work. If the employers are prepared to do that—and we know they are—if they are prepared to co-operate, then surely there should be some financial incentive for those extra expenses, such as a tax write-off that would encourage them to do that.

Municipal governments should be provided with incentives to provide necessary subsidized space within a licensed setting. Up to now, far too many municipalities have said: “Look. This day care thing, the child care thing, is too much for us. It is too much money. Let the senior levels of government do the work and spend the money. We cannot.” Frankly, I think that through some financial incentives, the provincial government could indeed encourage more of the municipalities to become more directly involved in establishing some subsidized space in a licensed setting.

Finally, to go back to the point of public awareness, as I said at the very outset, we are facing a major crisis in the child care field. I said it was the major social issue of the day; I think I am right on that. We have allowed this to happen because of public attitudes, awareness and values, which have been reflected by our parliamentary system and which have been reflected in public policies and public programs, so that all of this has lagged far behind the big changes that have taken place in society.

Once we do some catch-up on this, we should never again allow ourselves to get into the kind of situation where this enormous gap exists between the social changes that have taken place and the public measures that have been developed to catch up and to deal with these changes. There has to be an ongoing program of awareness and a program of research.

For example, our friends down here say that the nonprofit agencies are far better than the commercial agencies, but we have never yet done, in this province or in this country, a study

of the consumers of these services, the kids and the parents who use this system. We do not know how they feel about the nonprofit sector or the for-profit sector. I think we ought to get down and find out what the consumer feels about it. This is all part of the growing awareness and the growing sensitivity that we have to develop and maintain in an ongoing system.

Anyway, I am really disappointed. I am sad that I have to conclude that there was absolutely nothing in this throne speech that provided some kind of a coherent public policy and program so we on this side could at least say: “That is great. We can at least support it or we do not support it.” Nothing came out of it. It was bafflegab and simply something that was designed on the basis of: “How many votes can we get over here? How many can we get there?” There is this whole ambivalent approach to the question, “Do we support the commercial operators or do we not?” On the one hand, yes, and on the other hand, no. If we talk fast enough, we will get votes for both sides and then we will move from there. It is really—

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: It is especially bad for you when you are getting no voters from either side.

Mr. Baetz: We will get the voters because they will understand that over here, at least, we have a coherent, consistent, comprehensive, humane and enlightened policy for child care to face this big issue, to face it finally and to face it as we should and as we will when we take over government.

Mr. Warner: Could the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz) very succinctly capsule for us how he justifies making money strictly for the care of children? I understand all about the selling of toys, baby food and all that big long commercial that he gave. I understand that. We want to cut through to the essence, which is making money for providing the service of caring for children. Can the member please explain how he justifies that?

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other comments or questions?

Mr. Harris: I am just delighted to stand in my place and say that, on behalf of myself and the people of Nipissing, I am proud to associate myself with the remarks and the comments that have been made by the member for Ottawa West in this Legislature today.

I think he has put forward very positive suggestions I am pleased to be associated with. It is not the type of bafflegab and what not that we have seen in the throne speech, nor that we hear

from the minister. Very succinctly, he has laid forth the type of recommendations that a Conservative government would follow. They are the type of recommendations that indicate a compassion and a caring for the people of the province who need help. At the same time, I think they are recommendations that do not throw away taxpayers' money on those who do not need help.

It is one of the finest, most concise explanations of where we have to be going in this policy field and I am delighted to associate myself with those remarks. I congratulate the member on one of the finest speeches I have heard on that particular area of social policy since I came here in 1981.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other comments or questions? If not, the member may wish to respond. You have up to two minutes.

Mr. Baetz: As I indicated during my remarks, it depends entirely on what kind of a society we think this is. If it is a totally socialist society, then there is no place at all—the New Democratic Party is quite consistent, at least; the government waffles on it but the NDP is consistent in saying there is no room for profit—there should be no commercial day care operators.

We say this is a pluralistic society. It does have private enterprise; we are a welfare state. We are a mix of the two, and there is room for both. We are saying that the parents should be given the widest range of choice. Do they want to send their children to a commercial centre? Fine. If they do not, send them to a nonprofit centre. But they should be given the choice. If they feel they are not getting their money's worth out of the commercial centre, it will close up in no time flat, because the parents are not going to send their children there. They will send them to the nonprofit centre.

I think it all boils down to the concept we have of the kind of society in which we live. I simply do not believe for one minute that—I know the NDP members say, "The commercial operators are in it for money, not for love"—I have talked to a lot of commercial operators who are in it for love, as well as for whatever little money they get out of it. There is not much money to be made in this field.

Mr. McClellan: They should keep their hands out of the public treasury.

Mr. Baetz: If the member sees no room at all for private enterprise, he obviously sees no room for it here in child care. I can understand that. He is consistent. I do not happen to believe and I

know my party does not happen to agree with that concept.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has now expired. Debate? The member for Scarborough-Ellesmere.

Mr. Warner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You noted, of course, that the member did not answer my question.

As you are well aware, Mr. Speaker, there is quite a long lineup of people who wish to enter into the debate on the throne speech, a long lineup of people who are very disturbed by that throne speech and wish the opportunity to participate and to say in very straight terms why we are dissatisfied with the speech from the throne.

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In order to co-operate with my colleagues, I have agreed to limit my remarks to approximately half an hour. I know that is very disappointing to many in the House, so what I will do first, at the outset, is list a number of topics that I wish to speak at length on, time permitting. If I exhaust the time before getting to all the topics, the members can rest assured that as we sit over the next little while, I will reintroduce the topics at the appropriate moment.

Given the chance, I will speak about youth and its concerns; employment; training; educational opportunities or lack thereof; co-op programs; co-op re-entry programs; the Futures program, with which the government has some serious problems, summer jobs, the Ontario Youth Guarantee, the unemployed help centres, the Ken Dryden report that the government has conveniently shelved, and the community-based programs the government does not support.

In general, I will speak about the difficulties women encounter as they attempt to enter the work force, especially in nontraditional jobs; the democratization of the colleges, which is in a stage of infancy; women in the work world and especially the role of educational institutions; employment for the disabled and for injured workers, the now infamous letter of intent that was signed between Ontario and the federal government that I am sure the government of Ontario now regrets; and student assistance at colleges. All these topics are related to my critic portfolios.

In addition, I wish to speak about issues that affect my riding; such as the Rolland paper mill, senior citizens—namely, Bill 3 that the government has been stalling—and of course the long and very frustrating fight we have had to establish a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough

General Hospital, the bigger question of overcrowding at Scarborough General, auto insurance and the problems of housing.

Finally, since many of us feel we have a role that goes beyond the Legislature as it pertains solely to Ontario, I wish to spend a few minutes speaking about Cyprus, Armenia and Nicaragua.

To begin, the members will no doubt know that this government does not have very good intentions when it comes to the unemployed help centres. Briefly, the history is that it was initially a responsibility of the federal government. The federal government decided it no longer wanted to have this responsibility and so simply dumped the project into the lap of the provincial government. To its credit, the provincial government took on the challenge of trying to assist with the unemployed help centres.

It is important to realize that the unemployed help centres provide assistance, especially to older workers, helping people find jobs when the place where they are working is shut down or where there is a slow-down or the company decides to pick up and go somewhere else because of the lure of tax dollars elsewhere; a whole variety of reasons. Older workers come into the unemployed help centres and are given a great deal of support. In communities such as Sault Ste. Marie, Hamilton and Windsor, these unemployed help centres have provided some real, solid support for people in their communities.

However, it appears to me this government is intent on closing those centres. It seems the way it is going to do it is to provide so much frustration and so many roadblocks that people will simply give up.

This is really quite intriguing. In a letter dated April 30, 1987, Cheryl Cooper from the unemployed help centre in Niagara Falls writes:

"When we first applied for funds from the Ministry of Skills Development, Ted Schmidt was our project officer. Ted had come here in January of 1986, and we were told at that time to submit a budget for February 1986 to January 1987. This was done and approved. When Sara Rans took Mr. Schmidt's position, it was then that we were informed that the fiscal year ran from April to March, and we were asked to submit two budgets; one from February 1986 to March 1986 and another from April 1986 to March 1987. We were not aware, at that time, that we would have to be approved again, as approval was already given. Now they are telling us that we will not receive any funds for that period. I would like to question the reasoning for

this when it was already stated that we would in the beginning. It would be very helpful if you could explain, and possibly review the situation again."

This is quite typical of the kind of bureaucratic bungling that has occurred repeatedly, centre by centre, whether it is the one in Brantford, Niagara Falls, Sault Ste. Marie or any other place. It seems to me that they cannot simply say it is confusion, although there obviously is quite a bit of confusion in the Ministry of Skills Development; to me, this appears to be a blatant attempt to try to shut down those unemployed help centres. That is a shame because they do valuable work.

In fact, the cruel irony will be that as we move more through the stages of youth unemployment being decreased, we will find that there will be a sharp increase in the number of older workers who are thrown out of work and there will be an even greater pressing need for the unemployed help centres, not less.

Youth held a United Nations Association International Conference on the Future in which among other things the arms race, unemployment and the environment were all discussed. This was in Hamilton in 1985. It is quite interesting to read about it. If the members have not had the opportunity, they should read the report from the Youth Conference on the Future. This is just a short excerpt from it in terms of the problems and the recommendations. I am quoting from page 6 of the report:

"Young people in particular should be provided with adequate background information about this issue"—that is the issue of the arms race—"before being confronted with the problem. Further education of very young people might be started by using comics, cartoons, picture-books, etc., with regional conferences and participation from authorities at the school level."

In other words, there should be work done through our educational system so that young people can understand all the ramifications and all the different points about the arms race.

This statement the House is about to hear is very interesting: "Canada's international role is unclear." That is coming from young people. That should be very disturbing to us. Young people do not see that Canada's international role is clear. Our policies are not clear. That, to me, is wrong.

Here is a recommendation they make: "Canada must make steps towards becoming more independent in foreign affairs and improving its

reputation as an effective mediator.” That statement of course was quite prophetic at the time because it was borne out again this morning in an article in the *Globe and Mail* that the members may have read, where Central American countries are calling on Canada to take a more independent stand and use its influence as a mediator between the United States and those countries that are experiencing a lot of difficulty, such as Nicaragua in particular, which is under attack from the United States. They are looking to Canada to take a more independent and forthright position.

There are many more recommendations. What was particularly disturbing about the conference on the future was that, in general, young people view the arms race with alarm. They view with deep concern their chances of employment. They view with alarm as well what is happening to our environment and what appears to be some very small steps that are taken towards protecting our environment.

1620

I want to dwell for a moment on unemployment. I think it is important for us to remember that in general, whatever the unemployment rate in an area, it will be approximately double for young people. People under the age of 24 will experience approximately double the rate of unemployment that the whole region is experiencing. For example, in some northern communities where there is an unemployment rate of approximately 12 per cent, for people between the ages of 17 and 24 the unemployment rate will be in the neighbourhood of 20 per cent. That should be quite disturbing and quite frightening for us.

However, there really was nothing in the throne speech to suggest that the government was prepared to take the problem seriously and do anything about it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the accord item called for a plan to attack youth unemployment. The throne speech does not really back that up. The only thing we have seen from this government is the Futures program. While the Futures program has some benefits and has been of help to some young people, and there is no question about that, it is minor and it is tinkering. The government knows that and I know it.

A very objective source is Ken Dryden who wrote an excellent report that I commend to all members of the House. It is a superb document, and if I may say so, not typical of a lawyer's writing. It has beautiful style and is easy to read. He is very straightforward. What Mr. Dryden

says in his report is basically that programs such as Futures are nothing more than tinkering, that what is needed are some solid programs that use the educational base as a place to start learning about the work world while obtaining an education, a blend of education and work experience, and that it really requires some solid work.

Not to anyone's surprise, the government decided to bury the Dryden report. The day after the Dryden report was announced and there was a press conference, the government pretended it did not exist. "Let us hide the thing, shelve it and maybe it will go away." It is not going to go away because the sentiments expressed in that report speak to one of the serious weaknesses of this government, and of course of the previous government that similarly showed very little interest in changing the status quo.

While we are speaking about youth, I cannot help but be disturbed by headlines that say, "Mental Health Services for Young Called Inadequate," from a story on May 29, 1986, in the *Toronto Star*. "Mental health services for young people between 16 and 20 are inadequate, with many slipping through the cracks between children's and adult services, a new report says." That is from the Metro Children's Advisory Group. This would be Metropolitan Toronto. "Ten to 15 per cent of Ontario children and adolescents need treatment for some form of mental illness, according to recent studies." For Metro, that would mean between 19,200 and 28,000 young people requiring therapy. Yes, the services are inadequate.

As we speak about the different parts, whether it is unemployment, the high school drop-out level which is extremely high, or mental health services, I want the members to try to put it into the context that what we are trying to look at is an average profile of a young person in Ontario. The prospects are not very good.

Many thousands of young people are going to find themselves in need of mental health services, but the service is not available. They are trying to find work, but the work is not available. Four out of every 10, or 40 per cent, will drop out of school. To put that into context, for every young person who drops out of school in West Germany, seven youngsters will drop out of school in Ontario. We are doing something seriously wrong.

Unfortunately, in the throne speech, which as many have mentioned is the longest in history and seemingly covered the waterfront, there was no mention of what is intended. I do not know

why the government is so complacent about youth unemployment, about young people dropping out of school or about the rate of illiteracy. A cautious estimate is that 20 per cent of our work force is illiterate. That is not only a crime in terms of the individual not being given the opportunity to read and write, which I would expect to be a birthright in this province, but in some cases it is also literally putting workers at risk. They are in work situations where they cannot understand the instructions, cannot read the labels and do not know what kinds of dangerous goods they are handling. Illiteracy is an extremely serious problem and this government apparently has no answer for it.

What is remarkable to me is that the government mounts this program, Futures, which it trumpets and says is the most wonderful thing since sliced bread, but it has no other program. It has nothing else to offer. If the members want to know how marginal this approach is, the minister will say it has helped 50,000 young people. While he is supposedly helping 50,000 young people over a period of 16 weeks, on any given day in this province there are approximately 100,000 young people who are out of work, out of school, not collecting welfare and not collecting unemployment insurance. As the minister has said so many times—I think it is the phrase he uses—“Things are going swimmingly.” Sometimes I wish he would take a swim somewhere. It is far from a bright picture.

For those who are interested in collecting news reports, as I enjoy doing, and taking a look at them, here are some of the headlines. One from the Ottawa Citizen reads, “Save Jobless Young, Report Urges,” concerning a 109-page special Senate committee report on youth. I had the opportunity to read that report and it is quite a good report, but it establishes that there are more than 700,000 young Canadians who are jobless and belong to a “lost generation.” That is the term used. That should be quite disturbing all by itself. Time does not permit me to read the entire article. It is an extremely long document on the hopelessness young people feel about being unemployed.

“Where’s the Help For Unemployed Youth?” That is a headline in the Toronto Star, April 25, 1986. This is by Anthony Westell. It closes off, “To solve the problem of youth unemployment, what we need is not senators who fast but governments that act.” It is true, both in Ottawa and at Queen’s Park.

This interests me, and I am going to quote from a paper I do not agree with on most days. In

fact, I will have a few critical words to say about it in a moment. This is from Lorrie Goldstein, who is a columnist here at Queen’s Park with the Toronto Sun, “Dryden’s Report Scores.” In his article he goes over the models that were developed by Ken Dryden when he took a look at Sweden and West Germany and so on. Lorrie Goldstein finishes up by saying, “‘It is not that any of these systems is perfect,’ Dryden argues, ‘but each of these societies has decided that full employment and realistic job training is its foremost priority. Frankly, it is refreshing to hear someone propose how to change the education system to help the young rather than simply bitching about the young and the system.’”

1630

A good article by a reporter with whom I do not usually agree, but even the right-wing press recognizes that we have a very serious problem with unemployed youth and that there are some good answers in other countries. Of course, this government is not any different from the old government in that it does not wish to look outside our boundaries. All the answers, all the wisdom in the world, is cornered right here at Queen’s Park, sitting on that side of the House. That was the situation under the Tories and, quite frankly, it does not appear to have changed any.

The Tories can pat themselves on the back. If they want to have tunnel vision about these issues, they can go right ahead; they are welcome to it. I happen to think that is a shallow way to go through life. However, that is the choice those folks have taken.

How much time have I left? Does anyone know how much time I have used? Is anyone keeping track?

Mr. Speaker: Close to half an hour.

Mr. Warner: Close to half an hour? No, you are putting me on. At the risk of running into problems with my whip, I will take a few more minutes.

We had the opportunity—I say we: my colleague, the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), who is our party’s critic for education and universities, and myself released a paper on April 2 called the Ontario Youth Guarantee. I am not going to pretend this is some sort of creative wisdom that came out of our offices. We took a look at programs in other countries and other jurisdictions and then tried to pull together what we thought was the best those programs had to offer and put it into an Ontario context. We came up with the Ontario Youth Guarantee. It has five objectives and I think they are worth stating for the record.

1. Reintegrating into long-term educational, training and work opportunities the young people who account for today's high rate of youth unemployment and the 40 per cent high school dropout rate.

2. Structuring young people's transition years so as to initiate a pattern of life-long learning and "learning a living."

3. Addressing the inadequacies of apprenticeship and other forms of vocational training by making them more flexible, more accessible and better matched to the needs of young people.

4. Addressing the inadequacies of the high school system for nonuniversity-bound young people and especially those pursuing technological education.

5. Addressing the problem of access to post-secondary education by providing an Ontario grants-only system of student aid, geared to income to remove financial barriers for children of working families.

In particular points, what is interesting to me is not that this program is unique in its concept, but rather that the government which signed the accord, one item of which was to bring in something solid with respect to opportunities for young people, failed to do so. Two years later we had to do the work for them. Obviously at some point we will have the opportunity to bring this program to fruition and I look forward to that opportunity.

Youth guarantee offices would provide skills evaluation, job search training, career and education counselling. It guarantees to young people up to age 20, and in any case for at least two years, a coherent system of education, training and work opportunities. The idea is to blend education with the opportunity for training and work experience.

It lasts until satisfactory full-time work is found. It is for all young people, regardless of education, who have not secured full-time work.

It would do the following: "Help the applicant construct an appropriate program of work, training, further education or some combination thereof; undertake active full-time job placement with applicants; administer, monitor and continuously evaluate a province-wide network of youth guarantee jobs; facilitate the formation of youth co-ops around identified unmet community needs; provide one-stop information on youth support programs and help independent youth applicants set up co-op residences to provide mutual support."

It goes on. There are many more details. I guess the salient point of this is that, first, we

have to put youth employment in the context of lifelong learning: the opportunity to acquire skills one can use for the rest of one's life, the opportunity for retraining, the opportunity for a further education and learning while on the job; and that would put it in a context of full employment for our whole province, a goal which the Liberals have never spoken about and which the Conservatives have never spoken about.

I do not know how on earth they expect to achieve full employment unless they at least address it and make it a goal, but perhaps it is not in their interest to do so. Perhaps they are not really quite so interested.

As I mentioned before, there are serious problems with the letter of intent. It is becoming quite apparent that because of the arrangement between the province and the federal government, our community colleges are being undermined. We are now experiencing teacher layoffs in our colleges because of that agreement, because of what the federal government is doing.

The federal government is attempting to privatize our community colleges. I hope they do not get away with it, but if they had their way they would sell off the community colleges. That is quite evident. One way to undermine that, of course, is to provide funding for private concerns to run the same kinds of courses as are being offered at the local community colleges; without any system of evaluation, without any control of quality and yet providing the money, then they can undercut the college in terms of tuition fees.

The colleges are being threatened. In addition, they have cut anywhere from 10 to 40 per cent of the manpower placements at the colleges. The colleges rely on those manpower placements and they have been cut. That is direct dollars, so the colleges are faced with a severe economic problem.

This government cannot sit by and simply blame it on the feds, because it signed the agreement. It did not have to sign, but it did.

I see this terrible person called a whip has shown up.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: By popular request.

Mr. Warner: Yes.

There are many more problems, as I mentioned, whether it is the inflexible attitude of this government towards community-based groups or the lack of direction that is shown in helping to provide meaningful summer work for students or a whole range of problems that exist, for unemployed help centres or in the Futures program or whatever it is, where this government

has not shown the appropriate direction. I will be raising these issues over the next little while.

I want to close, as other members did in the House today, by raising the question of plant closures and the lack of legislation, the one item in the accord where the Liberal government broke its promise. It appears to me now that it obviously had no intention of following through on its commitment.

Rolland paper company, which was located in my riding, took \$5 million from the federal government, along with money from Quebec, to refurbish its plant in Quebec. It then moved its operation from Scarborough to Quebec, thanks to the money put out by Ottawa and Quebec City.

One hundred and eighty people lost their jobs and they probably would not have lost their jobs if we had had proper legislation in place, because the company in this situation could not have justified the move to Quebec. There is no way they could have justified that plant closure.

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That is tough legislation that requires political will and some political courage, and I suggest that is why the Liberal government reneged on its promise and has absolutely no intention of fulfilling the promise it made and to which the Premier put his pen and his signature.

It will be very difficult for the people in my area to trust this government. Heaven help us if it ever ends up with a majority, because from the experiences we have had here, especially with plant closures and the auto insurance industry, this little group over there is not to be trusted. If the people ever gave them that kind of majority, I am afraid the people would be sorry, as they were under the former regime, especially in the latter years.

Having made those few brief remarks, although I realize members would like me to go on at greater length, I will relinquish my spot so that others will have an opportunity to participate. As with myself, I know that others wish the opportunity to attack this wishy-washy government.

Ms. Caplan: I rise today to participate in the debate on the throne speech as a representative of the riding of Oriole, a riding which I have described before in this House as a microcosm of Ontario, for my residents span the socioeconomic spectrum and reflect the multicultural diversity of this great province. I spend a great deal of time speaking with my constituents. We discuss their problems, their concerns about the present and the future. We talk about the phenomenal technological and social change which we have

witnessed in this province. We now live in the information age where messages and money can be sent around this world simply by pressing a button.

Mr. Speaker, I know you will find this hard to believe, but I remember life without television, as do, I believe, most of the members of this Legislature.

Mr. Brandt: You are not that old are you?

Ms. Caplan: Yes, I said members would find it hard to believe.

Our children, my children, will not remember life without computers. Demographically, our population is ageing. People are living longer, and while I do not think it is at all related, they are having smaller families. More and more families require a second income just to maintain a comfortable lifestyle.

We should remember that since 1980, Ontario has come full circle from the depths—I am sure my colleague the member from Sudbury will recall; he was here in the early 1980s when Ontario was at the depth of recession—to today, in 1987, when we have prosperity, some might even say the height of economic prosperity.

Because of these and the other rapid changes in our society, my constituents understand, I understand and it is important for the members of this Legislature to understand that we must not take economic prosperity for granted. This throne speech speaks to not taking economic prosperity for granted. It builds on the commitment of last year's speech. It says that we must have and that we need continued strong, responsible leadership, as this throne speech presents, to ensure our children are not left a legacy of industrial pollution, unemployment, high inflation and economic uncertainty.

This is what I hear my constituents fear. They fear that economic instability and that uncertainty.

This throne speech responds to my constituents' concern. As I said, it builds on the commitments made in last year's speech, restoring excellence to the education system, dealing with the social and economic implications of our changing society and meeting the challenges of an increasingly competitive international economy.

Current economic buoyancy has allowed this government to address the many problems of chronic underfunding, particularly in the areas of education and training, hospitals and social services. But this is only a beginning. We must—and this throne speech recognizes that we must—now invest for the future. During this time

of economic prosperity, we must invest for future economic stability and competitiveness. The best way to do this is by investing in our province's greatest resource, its people.

To this end, the throne speech commits to improving our education system and to providing additional capital funding to modernize facilities and alleviate situations of overcrowding. We must place stronger emphasis on basic learning skills, and the throne speech makes the commitment that over the next five years we will reduce the unacceptable 33 per cent dropout rate in our high schools.

A functional illiteracy rate of 20 per cent in this province is unacceptable. It is not just within the student population but also within the entire population, those born, raised and educated in this province. The throne speech says we shall do something about that.

The throne speech ensures access to educational support services for students in the north. It is important to ensure that kind of access to everyone in this province, whether they live in the north, the south, the east, the west or in the Golden Horseshoe.

Throughout the past two years, this government has taken steps to revitalize our colleges and universities. The throne speech commits that this will continue. Operating funds have been increased and special emphasis has been placed on the promotion of excellence—let me underline that—the promotion of excellence through faculty renewal, improved research support and enhancement of equipment and library resources. Only by revitalizing our school system and our educational programs and by making them accessible to everyone, north or south, east or west, only by ensuring this accessibility will we be able to equip all Ontarians.

My constituents in Oriole and the constituents of all members of this Legislature must be equipped to meet the challenges of the next century. That is why I believe this government will continue to strive for improved economic competitiveness through technology, innovation and modernization, three very important key components of the throne speech.

Excellence in education is the focal point of the government's strategy for building an internationally competitive economy and strengthening the ability of Ontario to meet the rapidly changing social needs and social environment. That is why the Premier (Mr. Peterson) established the Premier's Council. He brought together the best minds of industry, labour, universities and government to help all Ontarians build those

foundations upon our economic strengths so that we can develop long-term economic stability in this very competitive world.

This government is committed to the principle that all people in Ontario should be able to live as independently as possible in their homes and in their communities. We are committed to the principle of improving the quality of life for Ontario's senior citizens, physically disabled and developmentally handicapped. The development of an accessible, effective system of community health care alternatives, begun last year, has done much to redress a decade of neglect, but the work is far from complete. This speech from the throne makes the commitment that a great deal more will be done to ensure that Ontarians will be able to live as independently as they possibly can and that they will have access to the greatest health care facilities we can provide.

1650

The speech from the throne further sets out an agenda for more affordable housing, environmental protection, equal economic opportunities, health and safety protection and so much more. It reflects the principle that David Peterson's government is one that reaches out to all Ontarians. It is a government which, in the throne speech, commits itself to the revitalization of our social, economic and political institutions. I will restate that now is the time to rebuild that vital infrastructure. We are committed to ensuring that every man, woman and child in this province has an opportunity to participate fully to the extent of his or her potential and to participate fully in all that this province has to offer.

This is clearly a government committed to serving the long-term interests of all the people of this great province. This speech from the throne deserves support from all members of this Legislature because it sets an agenda for this province that, because of the initiatives, foresight and vision of this agenda and this throne speech, will be prepared for the 21st century.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to participate in this debate and I do so on behalf of all my constituents from the great riding of Oriole who I believe have a confidence in the vision of this speech from the throne. I urge the support of the members of this Legislature.

Mr. Gregory: May I say it is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to speak in the throne speech debate, particularly with a woman Speaker in the chair. It is quite a precedent and I think it speaks well for the future. I am not suggesting anything, Madam Speaker, but perhaps it is something we can look at in this day and age

where women are proving themselves to be equal to any task they achieve. Certainly, not that they were under any test for that matter, the fact is that the opportunities seem to be presenting themselves. Perhaps some day we can look forward to just what I suggested earlier, perhaps even a woman in the leader's chair. That may happen sooner than we think.

Mr. McGuigan: They became equal back in 1929.

Mr. Gregory: I knew that. The member was probably there though, and perhaps I missed reading it. I do not want to be confrontational. I am trying to be complimentary. If the member wants to be confrontational, let us start right off and that will make my speech about 45 minutes longer. That is up to him.

It is a pleasure for me to take part in the throne speech debate and to make a small contribution. This has been a regular practice for me since 1975. I would like to have a few moments to talk about some parts of my riding and some parts of the issues in the throne speech that I find rather difficult to understand. Nevertheless, I would like to touch on a few points in the throne speech and perhaps make some comments on what has been said so far.

The riding of Mississauga East is not a very old riding in terms of its present structure, in that the original representative of Mississauga East was the representative of the entire county of Peel. That was the Honourable T. L. Kennedy. After T. L. Kennedy, the Honourable William Davis became the representative of the entire county of Peel. Then the area was broken down into two ridings, which I believe were Brampton or Peel North and Peel South, which pretty well encompassed the whole city of Mississauga.

In 1975, the area was reduced again to create three ridings in the area that encompasses Mississauga. Of course, when the next election occurs, it will be four ridings. The area in which I live has been represented by many people, and I am happy to say that pretty well all of them have been Conservatives. I expect it is going to carry on in that respect. I see no reason why that should change, except for a temporary lapse here and there.

The riding I represent is a totally urban riding, whereas at one time, the area was rural. Much of the best farm country in Canada is in south Peel. Unfortunately or fortunately, depending on the way you look at it, much of it has gone under concrete and it has become very urbanized. My riding in particular is totally urbanized, without any rural segment whatsoever.

Mr. McKessock: The corn just cannot come up through that cement.

Mr. Gregory: I did not hear that remark. If the member wants to interject, he will have to interject more loudly, so I can retort.

Mr. McKessock: It is hard to grow a good corn crop through cement.

Mr. Gregory: I do not think it was corn country. It was more an orchard area, and we had a lot of apples there. It was very successful orchard country. I am not a farmer, so I cannot describe what other crops they had in Peel South, but certainly they grew the greatest apples around. At least, that is what I am told. Many of the trees are still there. When they built subdivisions, they left the trees. We are a long way off the throne speech, but I did want to let some of the members know the nature of my riding.

To comment as briefly as possible on the throne speech, in my opinion, never before has the government of Ontario attempted so little with access to so much. If you try to get to the meat of the throne speech, you have difficulty doing so. It is like the saying that used to be on television, "Where's the beef?" There is very little beef there. There is an approach of something for everybody. It is very much an election throne speech, no question about it.

I am not saying there will be an election. There is no real need for one, of course. As somebody said earlier today, there are two or three years left to go before we need to have an election. I guess the approach here was: "In case we do have one, we might as well promise something to everybody. As long as we do not have to come forward with too accurate a budget too soon, then we do not have to justify anything we promise."

It is rather easy to do. There are not too many segments of our population that were not addressed in a general fashion in the throne speech. It pretty well covered everything, but no details of any consequence were given. In other words, "Where's the beef?" In my opinion, this government decided to forgo a unique opportunity to serve the people of this province. This administration was privileged to administer a healthy economy, which it had the good fortune to inherit. This government has not contributed in any way to the healthy economy that we have today in Ontario.

Mr. McKessock: During the recession, things were in bad shape.

Mr. Gregory: No. The member was elected at the same time I was, but he seems to have

forgotten a few things, such as the very heavy recession we went through during the last 10 or 15 years. Only latterly has the economy become healthy again, just in time to make promises.

Mr. McKessock: Two years.

Mr. Gregory: They have had two years. They can hardly say they took office and suddenly the economy became healthy. I think that would be unrealistic, apart from the excessive taxes that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) has continued to levy, even though they were not necessary. When certain tax concessions could have been given, he missed the opportunity. Maybe he is going to do that in the upcoming budget. He is going to let us know that he is going to give people back some of the tax that he had no justification in taking in the first place. It is rather interesting.

Mr. Ward: They bought an oil company. The last time those guys had \$10, they spent \$650 million.

1700

Mr. Gregory: Madam Speaker, I think I am being harassed here. Is it in order for them to harass me? I can hold my own, but you will have to give me a certain latitude here to respond if they are going to harass me. I would rather not respond to them because obviously they do not know what they are talking about over there.

While the government has chosen to give us a list of worthy objectives, rather than using the revenue windfall effectively, these proposals lack the strategy of long-term planning to implement them.

I was interested to hear the member for Oriole (Ms. Caplan) when she made her remarks and talked about the long-term planning in this throne speech. I do not know what throne speech she is reading, but it certainly was not the one which was read to us and of which I have a copy here before me. I do not know where she found the long-term planning in there. Maybe she is able to read between the lines.

I think that is a policy of the Liberal Party. I remember the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) used that philosophy of reading between the lines some time ago. Maybe we have not forgotten that philosophy. Maybe the member for Oriole was reading all this long-term planning between the lines. Certainly it was not evident in what I heard in the throne speech and what I have been able to read in it, and it is exactly the same as was read to us by the Lieutenant Governor. I presume there has not been any change.

Mr. Baetz: In the long term, we are all dead.

Mr. Gregory: That is right. We are just saying today that when you look on the walls outside and see all the names etched in marble and you consider that only perhaps about five per cent of them are still alive, it is not very comforting to see that. It just shows the relative importance of we members of the House. We should never forget that and we cannot take ourselves too seriously.

This throne speech serves only to outline the challenges before us. It is a clear reflection of Liberal philosophy that present conditions are acceptable and, therefore, it is not necessary to plan for the future. This seems to be a policy over on that side of the House: "Everything is okay today. We do not need to make any plans for the future."

Mr. Ward: Everything is going to get better.

Mr. Gregory: I do not think that is so. I have no doubt that we will soon be aware of the consequences resulting from this lack of vision.

Mr. Ward: Let us take a chance.

Mr. Gregory: There is the answer over there. My friend the member for Wentworth North just said, "Let us take a chance," and that is what the public of Ontario is being asked to do by the people opposite, to take a chance with their money. Can I quote the member on that? That was a good line. Let us take a chance. Let us spin the wheel of fortune, and if we are lucky—

Interjections.

Mr. Gregory: If I may continue, Madam Speaker, I would like to continue because I have a lot of important things to say—

Interjections.

Mr. Gregory: It is tiny talent time over there on the other side; they are having a lot of fun.

The throne speech made mention of more affordable quality housing and some particular action points were quoted, such as the adoption of a "housing-first policy" for surplus government lands and the stimulation of more housing for low- and moderate-income earners.

This policy is not going to do a darned thing for, say, tenants in sublet units who are suddenly forced to move and are unable to find a replacement unit; nothing whatsoever. This is a long-term proposition. Those people over there surely must understand the process when they suggest they are going to take these government surplus lands and suddenly houses are going to appear on them. They and I know that in order to do that, even if everything went well, they are

talking about five or six years before the first foundation would be dug.

Mr. Ward: Six years.

Mr. Gregory: Yes, we all know that. The member should know that.

All those houses we see growing up in Mississauga had been planned six years ago.

Mr. Ward: Ten years.

Mr. Gregory: Maybe it takes even 10 years to get them going. Thanks very much. It might even be 20 years.

The point is that the government is not going to satisfy the need for homes in any way by using that particular approach. I am not suggesting for one minute that the approach should not be used, but they should not hang their hats on it and they should not expect to see houses suddenly mushrooming where they never were before. There are such things as servicing. How does one take land away out in the country and suddenly service it? It is a magnificent problem that those people really cannot appreciate or have not tried to.

They are going to encourage home owners and municipalities to explore creative approaches to low-cost housing. I do not know what that means and I am sure they do not either, but it sounded great when it was read from the throne by the Lieutenant Governor. Here we are. Boy, these people are thinking ahead. They are going to encourage home owners and municipalities to explore creative approaches to low-cost housing.

Government members should tell me what it means; I do not know. There is no help there for residents faced with massive rent increases. The government is suddenly going to say: "We are going to have creative approaches to this. Boy, we are going to be creative. We are going to have a think-tank. We are going to have another study." I think the government is working on study number 353 now anyway. Why not add another one and have a study of creative approaches to building houses? It sounds marvelous. They are studying themselves to death. They cannot even fix the rent problem as it is now.

I have never been a great advocate of rent review and I have never made any secret of it. But the fact is that we had a rent review system we could live with. Under this new program, under the new Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling), the government has taken a workable rent review system and turned it into a bureaucratic nightmare.

They have included everything built since 1976. They have given new rights to landlords by which they can appeal. They have clogged up the review court so much, it will take three years to solve all the rent problems. This is one of the main problems I am getting from tenants in my riding. They say, "The landlord has increased our rent by 25 per cent." I say, "You have the vehicle to appeal." They say, "Yes, it is going to come up in three years." In the meantime they have to pay it. If they do get the money back, it is interest-free.

To me, this does not in any way present a solution to the rental problem. The government has created a nightmare. Why do they not solve that problem first before they start getting out and trying these new creative approaches to building houses? There are no new ideas to create in building houses. The construction business in Ontario is second to none. When new and better ideas come, they will come from the builders, not from the bureaucrats.

The government is going to develop creative programs with the private sector to create affordable rental housing with a possible future option to purchase. That is marvellous, but do they think for one minute that any businessman, in the development business or in the building business, is going to want any further extension of government influence on his investors or on him? Do they think it is going to create any kind of feeling of co-operation? Not on your life.

The building industry in Ontario—I hear the platitudes from the Minister of Housing from time to time about how many thousands of new houses have been created and how many thousands of new rental units have been created. I would like to see them; I do not know where they are. I think they are a figment of his imagination; they are just not happening. They are not in Toronto. They are not in Mississauga. I do not know where they are. Maybe they are in Nova Scotia, where they still allow builders some freedom of action.

I would like someone to tell me where all these new rental units are. The city of Mississauga, which is a booming city, has gone from about 100,000 people 20 years ago to close to 400,000 today and there is not one new rental unit being built in the city of Mississauga. I ask the minister to find me one.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: That is not our problem. That is the municipalities' problem.

Mr. Gregory: No, it is not. It is the government's problem. They have told the landlords, "Even though you build it new today,

we will not guarantee you any kind of freedom from controls." They have totally eliminated any possibility for a landlord to embark on an investment portfolio using rental buildings. The member for Ottawa East knows that is true. The fact is that we will not find them. Some of the biggest builders of rental accommodation in Mississauga have gone totally out of that business. How the government sees that solving the rental problem, I do not know.

The government is also suggesting the expansion of programs of integrated housing and support services for homeless people with special needs. That is a very worthwhile objective, but I do not know how they will attempt to do that. There is nothing in the throne speech but a bunch of wild statements saying the government is going to do this. Nothing says how they are even going to attempt it.

1710

Mr. Harris: Their track record has not been very good.

Mr. Gregory: It certainly has not been. The track record has not been good so far.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: The farmers love us.

Mr. Gregory: How many rental apartments are there on farms?

Hon. Mr. Riddell: We have done more in two years than you guys did in 42. That is what they tell me and I accept what they say as the facts, because farmers do not lie.

Mr. Gregory: The Minister of Agriculture and Food is getting rather defensive or paranoid or something. I do not recall talking about farms in my speech but the minister is getting excited.

The Acting Speaker (Ms. Hart): As the member knows, he should not respond to interjections, whether they be from the minister or otherwise.

Mr. Gregory: Thank you, Madam Speaker, but I think you will understand my problem. When the Minister of Agriculture and Food speaks, it is difficult even to hear what one is saying. You can appreciate my problem. I will try to struggle through.

The throne speech promises to introduce measures to improve conditions and increase the supply of affordable housing for roomers, boarders and lodgers. I guess the thrust of this is that people are going to be encouraged to provide rooms and lodging for people in their homes. This is all well and good and philosophically I do not find too much wrong with it, but I can tell them that they are going to encounter difficulties in municipalities where certain planning has been

done to accommodate residences and to provide services for the people who live in those residences.

When you start doubling or tripling up in those residences, then you are totally taxing in the servicing. If the Minister of Municipal Affairs can find me one mayor who is going to lie down and play dead for that one, I would like to see him. They are going to get all uptight if it is suddenly said that it is legal now for everybody to take in roomers and lodgers—the Parkdale phenomenon. If they do that, they are going to find that the very screamers on city councils everywhere who are crying for it will be the ones against them, the ones who will be fighting them. They will say, "Our services will not take care of it."

If they want to embark on a program of providing new services for—I think the minister winked. I think he agrees with what I have said. He has a problem and he knows it. He did not write the throne speech so I do not blame him for this, but he is going to have to suffer for it. He is going to get the flak.

That is enough about housing. It has problems enough and I do not see many of them being solved.

I would like to get into the area of transportation. I am going to be a little gentler here because I appreciate that the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) has been ill. I know that and I wish him well. I think he and I have a pretty good relationship and are able to solve our mutual differences by conversation. I like working with him so I am not directing my remarks to reflect in any way on the Minister of Transportation and Communications.

As a matter of fact, I made the statement recently to him that he is one of a bad lot, and I think he is. He is the best of a bad lot—that was it—and that is quite true. Unfortunately, he does not have the freedom of his own actions because of the interference of the Premier, and certainly the Treasurer has a heavy hand. He is not getting the funds he needs to do the things that are obviously needed and are conveyed to him on a regular basis by the very municipal mayors I am talking about and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the roadbuilders.

All these good people convey the message to the minister. Unfortunately, when he goes to the Treasurer, the Treasurer says, "Sorry, no more money at this time," except when it is politically expedient. When the member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) needs to meet the press, he can suddenly find a cheque for \$1.5 million to

expand Eglinton Avenue just before a proposed election. That is marvellous timing. I think it is great. The Minister of Transportation and Communications would not have done that, but unfortunately, that is what seems to be happening today.

There is a lot of talk about creating. In fact, one of the directions of the throne speech is to create major new transportation links to serve high-growth areas. It sounds marvellous and is a worthwhile goal, but it is not happening.

There was no mention of money. There are a couple of quick lines about the great things they are going to do in transportation. For heaven's sake, they cannot even repair the roads they do decide to work on without totally screwing up all the traffic in the Metropolitan Toronto area. However, I have to take the Treasurer and the Premier at face value and say that they are definitely going to make some moves towards creating new transportation links.

I have one in mind. I would like to volunteer one that they could do; that is, a new west Eglinton subway and a bus way linking that to Mississauga. Most engineers in the area of Metropolitan Toronto, and I am including Peel, Durham and what have you, will say that is a far more intelligent approach than the one conceived under Project 2011 where they are going to extend the subway along Sheppard Avenue East. To the minister's credit, he has yet another task force out there that is investigating and listening; perhaps it might even be leaning towards the idea of a bus way at that point.

I am not being small about this. What happened to Highway 407? It is a major project in the north. Everybody is screaming for it. Where is it? We have not heard anything about it recently. I think the people up that way are screaming about it. They certainly want Highways 407 and 87 or something such as that.

Mr. Baetz: They are getting very fed up. The member for Ottawa East made big promises and has done nothing. Rien de tout. Wait until Mr. Roy gets back.

Mr. Gregory: He will fix them, will he not?

Mr. Baetz: He will be looking over his shoulder to see where Mr. Roy is coming from.

Mr. Gregory: The Ontario Good Roads Association is an advisory body that ministers of Transportation and Communications tend to listen to if they are at all clever. I think the present minister, as well as the past one, is clever but he has not taken any action on the request from the Ontario Good Roads Association for additional funding for road repair.

At the last good roads convention, what was required was spelled out very clearly to the Premier, the Treasurer and the minister. It has been totally ignored. I hope the Treasurer is going to take a good look and say: "They are not just talking off the top of their heads. They know which roads have to be repaired and which do not. They gave us what was to them the minimum amount of money required." They have had no satisfaction on this at all. The speech from the throne has some perfunctory remarks about how we are going to put in more money to provide increased funding for the rehabilitation of roads and highways. That is the statement; that is it.

The speech from the throne indicates that they are going to take steps to integrate GO Transit and Toronto Transit Commission fares and services. I do not know whether this means we are going to have another study on this or what. If so, it will be study 374, but they are going to look at it. I think it is a great idea if it happens. There is no reason it should not happen, but it should be able to happen fairly quickly. If we are just talking about the TTC, perhaps we should also be talking about Mississauga Transit, Durham Transit and other organizations. Maybe we should be talking about more than just the TTC. The world does not end at the Metro border, I have found. There are transportation systems beyond the Metropolitan Toronto border and they probably should be looked at.

I think it would be very popular if an integration of fares were instituted. Nothing is more annoying than to come in on the GO train and have to pay another fare to get on the TTC. It is a little annoying. It is as annoying for me as it is if I take a Mississauga Transit bus to the Islington subway station and then I have to pay another fare to use the subway. It is a little annoying.

I mentioned the Metro Project 2011 a minute ago. Notwithstanding the fact that I do not agree entirely with the thrust it took, the fact is that Metro has requested certain things on that. The city of York, the city of Etobicoke, the city of Mississauga and the city of Brampton: All these towns have requested certain steps as a result of Project 2011 which was supposed to be from the Metro area but as it turns out is really for Metro itself. Very little attention was paid to areas outside Metro, be they Brampton, Mississauga, Durham or wherever.

1720

We have had no real reaction from the minister on that. As I say, he has this task force going around interviewing and trying to get information. I hope this will be expedited. This is one

area where perhaps the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) and I could agree. There are not many areas we can agree on and this is probably one where we could agree.

Mr. Callahan: Oh, come on. That is not true. We meet for breakfast every morning.

Mr. Gregory: Is there somebody the member for Brampton knows who looks like me? I do not know. I could not take that. It is nice but I could not do it.

At any rate, as I said, this is one we could agree on. There is a large growth to the west of Metro Toronto and we have to do something about it.

We heard today about the new SkyDome. The name is SkyDome. When it is finished, it is going to increase the problems immensely. Something has to be done, be it some form of rapid transit or whatever. Otherwise, we are going to be strangled with our own cars. We can take the creative approach and say, "Convince people they should not drive their cars." That has been tried before. If we do not have the proper rapid transit facilities to offer them, I do not know how we are going to convince them not to drive their own cars.

After two years in power, this government has drafted a throne speech that has given the people of Ontario no indication of where its spending priorities exist. The speech reflects the government's attitude that by a promise to inject revenue into each and every problem area, it is providing good government. It is the old, "Throw money at it; it will solve the problem" attitude. That seems to be what has been hinted at in the throne speech, but not having the benefit of the budget, we do not know.

An interesting philosophy would be that they promise all these things in the throne speech and then if, for some reason, they see fit to call an early election they can always say, "We were going to do it and we said so in the throne speech," but they have no justification for saying that because they have not budgeted it.

Mr. Harris: Their track record is not very good.

Mr. Gregory: No, they have not done well so far. Even the member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Kerrio) will agree with me on that. There is not a lot there to foster the confidence of the opposition parties in that government over there. We will be confident in them for at least the next 10 minutes.

They have promised a major capital funding program to modernize facilities for Ontario school boards and universities. That is great but there is no plan and no long-term strategy. There is a total absence of strategy. Suddenly, they are

going to throw great gobs of money at university systems, but with what intent? Who makes the decisions as to where it is needed? There are no guidelines or blueprints as to what they are trying to achieve. They seem to think they can throw money at things and the problems will go away. They do not go away. This gets votes. Maybe that is what is wanted.

Tell me it is not so, Vince. Surely you are not after votes.

Mr. Speaker: Is the member referring to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio)?

Mr. Gregory: The Minister of Natural Resources; I was making the point that surely he is not after votes. Surely not; I would not think so.

According to the throne speech, university administrations are suddenly going to be faced with the problem of great gobs of money and they are going to have to come up with new ways of spending it. Imagine that: University administrations are going to have to come up with ways to spend the money the government is going to throw at them. Will the taxpayers not love that? They are going to say, "The provincial government is throwing money at the universities and the universities are going to have to find ways of spending it." Will it make the taxpayers comfortable to know they are going to have to find ways of spending their money?

They had better come up with a plan of action—the Minister of Education has not done so yet—to see where we are going and what these great gobs of money are for before he starts throwing the money around, this money with which it appears they are trying to get votes.

Another area that gives me a little problem, and this one is all smoke and mirrors, is the practice of moving provincial government offices to northern Ontario. It is all well and good and it sounds pretty good. It sounds like we love the north and are going to give them something in the north. I love the north; there is no question about that. I have been there. I guess it is supposed to convey that we are creating employment in the north. How does moving a building with civil servants in it to the north create employment in the north? I do not know.

Mr. Wildman: I do not think they have suggested moving the building.

Mr. Gregory: It was a figure of speech. If they are depending on civil service jobs to create employment in the north, then the taxpayers are going to get very upset about it. I do not think that is what the people in the north are asking this government for. The people of the north are not asking this government to move its civil servants

up there so that it appears there is lots of employment. What they are asking this government to do is to create industry in the north to create jobs that will be taken by the people who live there, not to relocate people from Toronto, from Queen's Park, to the north to make it look good.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Your government brought mining and forestry to Toronto and we put it back where it belongs, in the north.

Mr. Gregory: I think the record will show that the Minister of Natural Resources was always a member from the north under our government. It is a recent phenomenon to have a Minister of Natural Resources from the southern Ontario area. It just shows—

Interjections.

Mr. Gregory: I really think that when we get into that argument, the minister is on the losing side, because when a member from Niagara Falls is the Minister of Natural Resources to administer natural resources in the north—

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: We tried it your way and it did not work.

Mr. Breagh: Now we have tried it your way and it does not work.

Mr. Gregory: At any rate, another thing they talked about in the throne speech was this government's commitment to open government. Oh boy, have we been hearing a bellyful of this one, so-called open government. Those people should be laughing up their sleeves when they say this because they know, as I know, that people who have contacted them have found this government to be more locked up than any they can remember, including the federal government.

Those people are not open. They are not open in any way. Even the campaign chairman of the Liberal Party of Ontario went on at length in a weekend interview about how open his party was. At the same time, he refused to answer any direct questions. Maybe that is their idea of openness but it certainly is not my idea. They should not give me this openness.

Does the Minister of Natural Resources recall the many questions that came to me about the market value study in Metro Toronto when I was Minister of Revenue?

Mr. Breagh: And how quickly the member put that out.

Mr. Gregory: That is right. Now we see the same question and we are getting the same answers I used to give. He is no more open than I was. I happened to realize that study was

outdated, but it is different now because it is a new study. We are still getting the runaround even with the new study. It was my interest to protect the home owners in the city of Mississauga, not to fool them the way those people are trying to do. They are going to hold that study until the election is over, are they not? I suspect that is what they are going to do.

They have a throne speech that commits itself to enhanced trade opportunities and makes particular mention of playing a forceful role in Canada-US trade negotiations. I agree that party has played a forceful role, but forceful in the negative, totally in the negative.

An hon member: Trying to scupper it.

Mr. Gregory: Trying to scupper it is true. They did nothing but put it down but now in their throne speech they are trying to appear as if they are going to try to get a constructive trade agreement. How can they do that and bad-mouth it all the time? They cannot do that. Certainly, the confrontational approach is not in the best interest of this country or province. Ontario should play a leadership role in encouraging a beneficial free trade agreement. This government now wants to take a more federalist approach and it wants to play a leadership role in Confederation. This is the new approach.

1730

I do not know what is happening here. Has the leader become ambitious? Say it is not so; say he does not have federal ambitions. The member cannot answer that. He does not even know where he is, except that he was naming the dome. He does not know where the Premier is now, so he cannot answer that question.

They have a desire to welcome Quebec into the Constitution, which is admirable. This is a goal all the people share, but I find it, in this case, to be very convenient, because in any federal-provincial conferences the Liberal Party's policy has been to adopt a confrontational approach in every case. It seems to serve its best short-term political goals to now become viewed as a nation-builder. Now we are a nation-builder, because of the relationship perhaps between the Premier and Mr. Bourassa. I do not know; but now the Liberal Party is trying to be seen as a nation-builder. It cannot handle Ontario but it is trying to get into the federal scene.

I do not want to get the Minister of Natural Resources exercised. I have a couple more local issues which are affecting me that I would like to get in.

In the throne speech, the government has pledged to introduce legislation to regulate health

and fitness clubs. This is good; it is long overdue. We have no indication right now as to when this is going to occur. I have had many complaints from the members of my riding recently about a group called the Body Elite Fitness Centre. The Body Elite—that is like an élite body; I think it is a good body.

What has happened is that people purchased memberships in this Body Elite health club. There was a great sales campaign. They were selling yearly memberships for \$35 or \$60 or something like that. Anyway, people invested as much as \$300 for long-term memberships and, suddenly, one day they went and found the place was closed. This is not a new story—

Mr. Harris: That would not have happened two years ago.

Mr. Gregory: Not under the previous administration, because we would have been in there. Our Solicitor General would have been very active in solving that one. I happen to know him.

At any rate, what we have is a case of what might well be fraud, where memberships are sold and, suddenly, just like that, the people are gone, the money is gone. The landlord was left holding a debt of about \$20,000 for the property and improvements that were made. There is no way these people can get their money back.

What happens with this? There is nothing in legislation that I am aware of that enables anybody—perhaps the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) or the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) can find ways to investigate this and do something about it, because there are an awful lot of unhappy people. Is the Solicitor General aware of the company I am talking about? I hope he will make it a point to get involved, because there are an awful lot of unhappy people who have been taken. They have been robbed just as surely as if somebody had stuck a gun to their heads. It is just unfortunate.

Another area I would like to touch on very briefly is the so-called homemaker program. Much mention has been made of the idea of keeping people in their homes. Rather than putting the elderly into nursing homes or senior citizens' homes, they can give them homemaker care. They have such a program in Peel, as I assume they have in other areas, and it is administered by the Red Cross. The funding comes to them from the province by way of the region.

In Peel, we have a rather interesting situation, because the federal government came out with a program in order to create employment, to help get more homemakers on the job. It came out

with a program and negotiated a \$6-an-hour salary for new homemakers.

Mr. Wildman: Exorbitant.

Mr. Gregory: No, that is not exorbitant. However, the present homemakers who were hired under the provincially funded Red Cross program are paid \$4.60 an hour. What we have is a group of homemakers who, when working at it, are paid \$4.60, and a federally funded program where the new ones are paid \$6 an hour. Our provincial government is not doing anything about putting funds in there at least to match that salary. At least bring the \$4.60 up to \$6 an hour, for heaven's sake.

Mr. D. W. Smith: Quit talking and let us bring in the budget.

Mr. Gregory: It does not require a budget to be brought in to do this and the government knows it. This could be done very simply by regulation. The Treasurer, the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) or whoever just has to sign the form to do it. They spill more than that in a day in those ministries.

They do not need the budget brought in to do that. Those people sitting over there who have been there longer than two years know that. What it takes is a regulation or a decision by the minister. The Minister of Health would just have to make that decision tomorrow and it could be done. Why are they not doing it? Do not tell me about this budget bit. That is nonsense. The government has indicated in the throne speech what it wants to do. If the government has the ability to do it now, without waiting for the budget, it should do it.

The Liberals talk about their concern for the small people. Here is a case for the low-income earner and they have a chance to do something nice, but I suppose they are too busy naming the domed stadium.

The government wishes to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption as a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle. La-di-da. That is marvellous. I do not know how it is going to do this. It is difficult. That must be tongue-in-cheek, surely, when they are talking about encouraging moderation in alcohol consumption. That is why they want to put it in the corner stores—to encourage moderation. That is a weird way of doing it.

The government talks like this. The whole throne speech is full of platitudes, nothing more. It wishes to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption as a means of promoting a healthy lifestyle. That is great. If the Liberals think

wishing that is going to make any difference, they are crazy, particularly when they keep talking about making it more accessible. They cannot have it both ways. Those people have not learned that, even in two years. Come to think of it, they did not learn it in the 42 years before that, either.

Mr. Baetz: They speak with forked tongues.

Mr. Gregory: What my Indian friend here says is true.

At any rate, I know the members would love me to go on, because they probably learned a great deal from my remarks, but I will have to restrain myself. It has been nice chatting with you. For those members who were paying attention, I hope at least one or two of my remarks might have got through. I know one did with the Solicitor General. He seemed to nod, at any rate. Maybe he was falling asleep, I do not know.

Mr. Baetz: He was falling asleep.

Mr. Gregory: He was probably falling asleep. The Minister of Municipal Affairs was the same way. He nodded a couple of times. His eyes were open, so I have to assume he was awake.

Mr. Speaker: I thank you for the opportunity of addressing the throne speech.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any comments or questions?

Mr. Harris: I am asking the member for Mississauga East a couple of questions on the statements he made.

The member referred to disgust, I guess, about the amount of money that was being spent on transportation. I would like to ask him what he thinks of a government that, from 1984 to the budget that is going to be brought in, will have had enough money to go from 1984, take inflation in 1985, inflation in 1986, inflation in 1987 and spend that amount of money plus \$5 billion. That is how much we are talking: over and above the 1984 budget, inflation plus \$5 billion.

What have they been doing? In 1984, a recessionary year, they spent \$104 million in northern Ontario on roads. That was our last budget: \$104 million at a time of severe restraint.

What are they spending two years later? It is \$106 million, \$2 million more, far less than even inflation of 4.4 per cent and 4.1 per cent through those two periods. It has already fallen way behind with all these extra billions of dollars. I would like to ask the member to give me his thoughts on whether he thinks that is fair, when

they are sitting there with all these billions of extra dollars.

1740

The second point I want to ask the member for Mississauga East, who talked about universities and throwing money at problems, is whether that is a solution to the problem. One just throws money at it, and what happens? I would like to ask the member if he might comment on that very example of that, where \$80 million was thrown at the universities last year. There was a big press conference. The money was going to go to hiring more faculty and more women. There were all of these wonderful goals. What actually happened? None of that. Not one new woman or one new faculty member was hired, and the minister's response was: "You are right. It did not work out the way I thought. It is not my fault. Blame the universities." He is the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara). I wonder what the member thinks of a minister who throws \$80 million out there when that is what happens to the money. Not one of those program objectives was met.

Mr. Speaker: Was it the member or the minister you were referring to?

Mr. Harris: The member for Mississauga East.

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other comments or questions?

Mr. Gregory: I am certainly glad my colleague the House leader has raised these points, because very important points they are. The first one is to do with the money spent in northern Ontario on roads, which was \$104 million back in the recession and which is \$106 million today when we are in anything but recession.

We should just consider for a moment the fact of the additional revenues brought in by the Treasurer, which he admitted were \$919 million, which is just short of \$1 billion, most of which came from increases in taxes on fuel oils, gasoline, licensing, sales tax and what have you. Most of it came from there. Let us be charitable and say only two thirds came from there. That two thirds is \$600 million; yet we can only go up less than inflation on the roads in the north. This is absolutely ridiculous.

Now the same sort of logic applies—

Mr. Harris: I am glad you agree with me on that one.

Mr. Gregory: I agree totally with the member for Nipissing on that, and I am glad he asked that question.

The second part refers to the money the Liberals promised to spend on schools. It was a similar sort of platitudinous statement when they made it as they are making now. They did not do it then and they will not do it now. When the government decides to fess up and start telling the truth about what it is going to do and then follow through and do it, then we can have more respect for it on this side of the House.

Mr. Breagh: I wanted to join in for a little while on the speech from the throne. I want to start by saying that we too are in favour of literacy in moderation, so the throne speech is probably eminently supportable in that sense. It seems to unveil the new Liberal philosophy of everything in moderation. I seem to have seen that model someplace before. I do not quite recall where, but I think the attempt that is there in the throne speech is to see how many people in Ontario could identify with this kind of a throne speech and to try to put a face on this new government for the first time.

It is really quite remarkable that almost two full years have gone without much of an identity forming around what this government wants to do. I suppose a large part of that is the fact that the unusual has happened: an accord, an agreement, was struck to provide a legislative timetable for the first two years of this government's life. That is unusual. In the history of parliaments, we have never quite seen that kind of an agreement put together. It is perhaps understandable that the Liberal government has not really had a chance to develop its own style and its own philosophy. That now seems to be emerging a little bit. The new Liberal message is kind of being portrayed here, that there is going to be a different style now put forward in the throne speech, followed up with a budget, and probably in the foreseeable future some kind of an electoral process might intervene as well.

I think the people in Ontario are now beginning to understand a little bit about what the new government really is. I think they are not much past the leadership. They are not much past the Premier himself as a person, being new, different and from a different political party for the first time in almost half a century. That, of course, is newsworthy and the media people have focused on the leadership. They have not spent a great deal of time examining programs, policies or other people in the cabinet, except to say that there is a whole new group of cabinet ministers now involved in politics in Ontario.

There is some good and bad in this. There is a much higher awareness now that there is at least a

parliament in Ontario. There is a Legislative Assembly, and for almost a two-year period now we have been televising the proceedings. I find that on the streets of my own community, more people are aware of the Legislature in Ontario than ever knew anything about it before.

In part, that is because the previous government was not anxious for people to know. It wanted people to know that there was a government here and that it ran the show, but it was not enamoured of the notion that people would understand there was a parliamentary process in Ontario; that it has its own Legislative chamber, there are two sides to the House, there is an opposition side and there are often many points of view put forward that are not necessarily shared by the government.

So I think there is a positive element about this. Democracy is not quite breaking out all over the place, but there is an awareness that governments can change. For a long time in Ontario that was simply not true. There is an awareness that the political process is worth something, that the process itself is worth watching and that it gives an opportunity for the public to have some input into the legislative flow of things. I do not know whether anybody has kept statistics on this, but I would warrant there have been more public hearings and more opportunities for the public to get involved in the process in a multitude of ways over the last little while than what we have seen for some time.

I want to talk a little bit about some basics. In the speech from the throne, one of the things that bothered me slightly was that there was not a whole lot of meat and potatoes in there. There was not an examination of what really needs to be done in Ontario and how this government would set out to do it.

I am convinced that many of the problems we have are not problems that are very dynamic. Perhaps they are even rather boring, but the infrastructure, for example, all across Ontario needs a careful examination. There have been a couple of attempts to make an inventory of problems that we have had in servicing our roads, our sewers, our sidewalk system, our transportation system, our municipal form of government and our boards of education, but there has not been much of an in-depth analysis of that either. A couple of bodies have tried to go at that, but for example, in all of what we do about the environment, however dramatic it might be to go to the United States and to talk to them about acid rain—and it may be a good deal less dramatic to talk to Ontario municipalities about whether their

sewers work—our major problems are probably shared equally between those two problems.

We used to point to the United States and say: “On the other side of the Great Lakes, they dump raw sewage into all of our Great Lakes system. We would never do that.” The truth is that we do that and we do that on a fairly regular basis. We do not, for example, separate much of the industrial sewage from ordinary sanitary sewage, so there is that kind of an integration. In my community and in many communities, industrial plants where we have now begun to get some level of understanding of what those chemicals do to the water system still dump much of that untreated into sanitary sewers at some point in the process and that finds its way into the Great Lakes.

There are big, dramatic problems about the environment that have to be resolved, but I want to put on the table today, for some thought, the more mundane things. If, for example, one wants to take some corrective action about whether the beaches in Toronto will be polluted again this summer, those problems will not be resolved in large measure by negotiating agreements with the United States. Those problems will be resolved by putting proper sanitary sewers into Metropolitan Toronto.

Parts of this huge metropolitan area do not have what, in most of Ontario, we would consider to be basic sewer services. They do not separate storm sewers and sanitary sewers in much of the city of Toronto. If one ever wanted to open up the beaches and solve the long-term pollution problems in and around Metropolitan Toronto one would, I suggest, first have to provide proper sanitary sewers and storm sewers and separation for those in all of Metro. That is not going to be cheap and perhaps it is not going to be even a very politically dynamic thing to do, but it has to be done. There is a basic problem there that has to be resolved.

1750

Let me move to a couple of other, not-so-dramatic areas. A motorist in and around Metro Toronto these days would swear that some terrorist group had infiltrated the Metro works department and had put in place some great master plan to drive two million people crazy during this summer. We see it every day. We cannot find a place on the road system in Metropolitan Toronto that really does not look like some war zone: streets shut down, the whole Don Valley Parkway shut down, ripping up something here, ripping up something else over there, total disruption of the street system.

In Metro Toronto it is very dramatic, but it is equally dramatic in a slightly different way all across Ontario, because we have not done much in the way of seeing that there is a proper maintenance program for basic, essential transportation commodities like roads. So again, with rather large amounts of money, if we want to resolve that problem, we will have to begin probably a long-term, systematic system for renewing the transportation system; that is, the roads.

In many parts of the province, we will find they do not have the roads to renew. It is particularly true in northern and eastern Ontario. In many parts of this province, the road system has never been put in place. We can find main transportation corridors like Highway 401, but even at that, when we look at the needs of the transportation system right now, not in the future but right now, we find that the huge, massive transportation grid across the top of the city comes to a roaring, grinding halt every day, several times a day. It looks like a very sophisticated road system, but the facts are that this very sophisticated road system cannot handle the traffic that is on it right now. We continue to build massive amounts of housing all around Metro, and the service area built around Metro is getting huge.

I come from the region of Durham, where the population explosion is quite dramatic. The unfortunate thing for many of us is that all that population explosion winds up on Highway 401 at about the same time every day at Pickering and comes to a dead halt. That is not really great planning. That is problematic at best. I believe we have had some announcement that we will extend that a bit farther into the middle of Pickering, but when we look at that, there is no way this planned expansion of the 401 will meet the demand. It is going to follow the demand for some foreseeable time. There are major problems there.

I would have been happier, for example, to see the province say in its throne speech, “This is not a budget, but we are getting ready for a budget and we have identified some problem areas, one of which is municipal financing,” which has undergone over recent years some rather traumatic experiences. I do not know of anybody sitting on a municipal council who has been able to say with some confidence for the last decade or so that we have enough financing to really run a municipality properly, whether that is street, roads, sewers or whatever. They have been

having their difficulties and there is a major problem there.

What we needed was a major commitment on the part of this government that it would examine those problems and begin to address them in a systematic way over a fairly lengthy period of time. That would have been a real good start at solving a number of problems, some small and perhaps not what this government wanted to talk about at this point in time, but problems which simply will not go away and which do have to be resolved.

Let me give members a couple of other examples of areas where I sense a great deal of uncertainty. In some ways, the throne speech does address that. In my community, Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology is really the only post-secondary education institution for many miles around. It draws on a huge geographic area now and has an increasing population base to try to deal with. It is now in the middle of a bit of a financial crisis that is forcing the college to make some unfortunate decisions, some of which do not make sense.

They had a scare in the last few weeks about a dental hygiene program. Of all the programs they run at the college, it is probably the one which is widely known, accepted and used by dentists, for example, throughout the region, almost from the border of Metropolitan Toronto to Kingston. It is the only program of its kind. It is an expensive program to run; that is true. It always has a great backlog of students trying to get into that program because there is a real job market in that particular field.

The college sent out some feelers in its early look at budget cuts and said, "We may have to cut this program." Of course, a great furore came out from the population saying: "That is stupid. You already have your major expenditure in the capital investment for equipment. Why would you stop that program now?" So the college relented.

The financial problems will not go away. The funding for community colleges does not make a whole lot of sense to me, but it is clear that it is in trouble. More and more of our communities are depending on those community colleges to integrate the education system into their community, which was the original concept. They need them to train people for local industry. They need them to train people for jobs. They need to do a good deal of training for economic development as well. The potential for community colleges in the future is probably one of the best places to look if one wants to solve, for example, the

problems in eastern Ontario regarding economic development. The one place where we have an educational institution at the post-secondary level which may do us some good in planning for a local economy is in things like a community college.

Throughout the north, there is room for expansion for the community college system and perhaps to develop some very real solutions to northern problems, solved by northern people in their own communities. If there is great potential in a community college system, that is probably one of the lightning points to take a look at.

In my view, community colleges should be the resources we are using to get ourselves out of economic problems. They should not be, in and of themselves, yet another economic problem to be resolved, and yet they seem to be.

Let me talk a little bit about some things of this same kind which I believe the government is going to have to tackle. All across Ontario, for many years, creeks and rivers have been the dumping grounds for industry. We are beginning to have a little bit of a sense of what they have been dumping, although we really do not have a good catalogue of it.

My community is like many other industrial communities. We have the same problems. We really do not know what is lurking around the bottom of most of our creek beds. We do know it is a major problem in terms of trying to clean up beaches at the end of the creek, because the constant flow of water keeps bringing all these old chemicals down.

What is the solution for this? It is apparent that there is not an easy solution. It is apparent that at some point we as a society will have to deal with this problem. Again, whether we do this through our community colleges or through the Ministry of the Environment or however we find the solutions, the process for finding those solutions must begin now. It is really incumbent upon this government to start to identify the problems, as we have in certain areas.

To put a little more perspective on it, I am concerned somewhat not that the Niagara River gets a lot of media attention about being a very polluted river source; I am concerned that it is only the Niagara River that gets this media attention. Many of us who have been concerned about environmental matters over a long period of time know that what happened in the Niagara River may be more dramatic than what happened in many other rivers, creeks and streams around Ontario, but it is not dissimilar. Many of the creeks that I played in when I was a kid are now

so polluted they will not hold any kind of fish life at all, the vegetation is down and we know there is a serious pollution problem there.

It may be that the Toronto media are not really interested in what is happening in the Moira River, but I am. It may not be quite as dramatic as what you see on your television sets periodically about the Niagara River, but I believe the problem is just as severe. We need to begin to analyse those things and find some solutions for them.

A few years ago, if you said "PCBs" I do not think very many people in Ontario would understand what you were talking about. I do not understand that particular problem that well, but I understand it to this degree. If you talk about polychlorinated biphenyls, these are the problems I know are related: (a) they are bad things, they are carcinogenic and (b) what is even worse is they are all over the place and we have not identified where they are yet, let alone what to do with them. It is another major environmental

problem in everybody's backyard. You cannot find a community in Ontario that has any industrial base that does not have that particular problem, and a host of others to go with it.

These are problems which are part and parcel of what was once modern technology, without perhaps much thought to what would be the end result of all of that. We have not really resolved those problems, but this category, this kind of listing of all the environmental problems we have, all of the transportation problems we have, these things need to be worked on now, steadily, over a lengthy period of time, with a plan for resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have some other remarks I would like to get into in my response to the throne speech, so I will adjourn the debate for now and pick it up again tomorrow.

On motion by Mr. Breaugh, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

ERRATUM

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No. 9

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, May 12, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, May 12, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Wiseman: I rise on a point of personal privilege pursuant to standing order 88(d). Last October 15, I submitted a question in writing to the government and was promised an answer on January 5 and again on February 26. Seven months have gone by. I am a patient person, but does it really take the government that long or does it intend to answer at all?

Mr. Speaker: I would like to inform the member it is not a point of privilege; it is a point of order. I am sure the government House leader will take note of your comment.

MEMBER FOR DUFFERIN-SIMCOE

Mr. Harris: I rise to correct the record. Today, the official release mechanism for the government indicated the member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. McCague) would not be seeking re-election. In fact, I just got off the phone with the member. He was quite incensed that the official government publication would indicate that. There is a nomination meeting scheduled for next Thursday, at which the member for Dufferin-Simcoe has every intention of seeking the nomination and hopes to be representing that great riding again. I would like the record to be corrected.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Speaking to the point of order, I welcome the comment by the honourable member, but I think it should be made clear, in case everybody's sense of humour is not as finely tuned as his, that this information was not printed or reproduced in any official government publication.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NIAGARA POWERMATIC CARWASH

Mr. Partington: I wrote to the Minister for Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) a year ago concerning the destruction on October 25, 1985, of the nine-bay Niagara Powermatic Carwash in St. Catharines, caused by excavations under its foundation wall and

footings by Liquor Control Board of Ontario contractors.

The minister, in reply, stated, "The LCBO is continuing to urge its insurers to arrive at some form of settlement as quickly as possible, in order to put Niagara Powermatic back in business and to mitigate any further damages."

One year and seven months after the destruction, one year after the minister's letter, the Kobryns, once debt-free and mortgage-free, now have bank debts and mortgage loans totalling \$335,000. They cannot afford any more delays and expense. The all-powerful LCBO and insurance companies have unwittingly conspired to destroy the Kobryns. The insurance companies fight against each other, each denying blame. The LCBO sits by and does nothing. Unless the minister intervenes and instructs the LCBO to settle and pressures the insurance companies to act out of fairness and justice, the Kobryns will be brought to their knees and ruined financially and the minister and his government will be responsible.

ANNOUNCEMENTS OF GRANTS

Mr. Wildman: Not long after the change of government, the new member of the cabinet for the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) instituted what I thought, and I am sure other members of the House would agree, was a very enlightened practice: when the Ministry of Transportation and Communications was going to provide additional grants over and above the normal municipal subsidies for road-building and so on, his office transmitted the information to the individual members, with a suggestion that the individual constituency member make the public announcement to the press in his or her riding.

Last week I received another one of these pieces of information and was about to make the press release as proposed by the minister's office when I received a copy of a periodical from my riding, called the North Shore Sentinel, published in Thessalon. Included on the third page is a release by the local Algoma Liberal Association president, Gary McMillan, in which he makes the announcement I was supposed to be making, according to the minister's office. I

realize the minister is ill and I am sure there has been some sort of confusion, but this should not go on.

SKYDOME

Mr. Bossy: I would like to take this opportunity to welcome to the Legislature today Kellie Watson and her husband, Rob, of Wallaceburg. Kellie is the winner of the Name the Dome contest and won tickets for life to every event at the SkyDome.

I want to wish them many years of good health so they can enjoy their good fortune. There will soon be another addition to the family so it is quite apparent that if Kellie or Rob cannot attend an event, they will have two replacements to attend the Blue Jays games or the Argonauts games.

Again, I want to congratulate my two constituents from Chatham-Kent for their good fortune and hope their stays in Toronto now and in the future will be pleasant ones.

1340

PREMIER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Harris: It is with a sense of deep anger that I rise in my place today to defend one of the finest men this Legislature has ever known. I will, with great distaste, read into the record the comic comments made yesterday by the Premier at the ceremony to name the domed stadium.

The Premier said that when he was Leader of the Opposition, he suggested the dome be named the Bill Davis Dome. He told the audience yesterday he had changed his mind. "If we named it after him and he subsequently committed some kind of criminal impropriety, we would have the dome named after a criminal." He then added, "Knowing Davis as I do, there is that very real possibility."

No one who has sat in this House set a higher standard of personal conduct than William Davis. He spent over two decades of his life serving the people of Ontario and was the Premier of this province for 12 years. It is a disgrace that the current Premier would refer to Mr. Davis in this fashion, in a public place, in the presence of the former Premier himself.

It is possible the Premier thought he was making a joke. We are reminded of his reaction when the Solicitor General (Mr. Keyes) made his reference to skin colour. At that time, the Premier said such remarks were wrong. They still are.

We sat in this House last week and watched the current government award the Order of Ontario

to our former Premier. We applauded that, and rightfully so.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That's what we think of him.

Mr. Harris: He is a great man who has given much to Ontario. To have the current leader of Ontario make such statements less than a week later is an insult to this House, to the office of Premier, to Mr. Davis, and an insult to the people of Ontario.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: The crisis in auto insurance is now more than matched by the crisis in the credibility of the minister in charge. Day after day, he contradicts what he said previously.

He had said for 18 months that the marketplace will determine it and can handle the problems. Then he proposed massive controls. On April 23 he announced reforms to reduce rates which will, in fact, increase them. He said the rate review board will control general insurance rates, but then in the next voice he said it would not.

Yesterday he hit a new high, an about-face in two hours. "The rate review board will make recommendations to the government, and we will act on them." Next, "The Ontario cabinet will not overrule decisions of the rate review board."

It is bad enough for the minister to deny and distort his own comments, but when he starts doing it about other governments and their insurance systems, it goes beyond the bounds.

Yesterday, in reply to my question on auto insurance, he said, "The Manitoba system is in deficit to the tune of about \$53 million, including its reinsurance obligations." The minister knows very well that has nothing whatsoever to do with the auto insurance system there. They have a surplus of \$54 million and reserves of \$321 million.

I suggest it is these kinds of things that cause the minister to refuse to debate the issue with me, because he knows they will not stand up in the open air.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Ms. Caplan: Last evening I attended a very important information meeting in my old stomping grounds at North York council chambers. The meeting was called to discuss a matter of great importance to my constituents as well as all the people of North York and Metropolitan Toronto. They were discussing the Sheppard subway line.

Rated number one priority for Metropolitan Toronto, Sheppard Avenue is one of the most heavily travelled routes in Metro and the province. Future development studies indicate that this rapid transit need will only become more urgent in the future. Four consecutive reports since 1980 have identified Sheppard as its top priority, and Metro council, in Project 2011, has already approved its share of funding for the line's construction and operation. The project, however, is on hold pending provincial funding.

After last night's meeting, the expectations of residents are very high, and I brought a gift for the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) from those attending last evening's meeting. The T-shirt sports their message, "The Sheppard subway—I need it now." They hope the Treasurer will find it comfortable enough to wear while putting together the final touches on his budget.

Mr. Brandt: In January—

Interjection.

Mr. Brandt: May I be allowed the additional time? My time was taken up by the Treasurer and his antics. Can I have the time turned back?

Mr. Speaker: Actually, the time is going on now.

Mr. Brandt: Thank you very much.

DELEGATION FROM SARNIA

Mr. Brandt: In January 1987, in response to a question I raised in this House, the Premier (Mr. Peterson) indicated that he would be willing to meet with a delegation from Sarnia, headed by the mayor, in order to discuss some of the problems in my riding. The Premier indicated in the affirmative at that time when I raised the question, and subsequently I reminded him of that commitment by way of letter.

In discussions with the Premier's office, I now understand that he is not prepared to meet with the Sarnia delegation within the next month or at any time in the foreseeable future. Constantly, the Premier of this province stands up and makes commitments in this House which he fails to follow through on, Mr. Speaker, and I request that your office bring to his attention that when he makes commitments in this House, he has a responsibility to fulfil those commitments.

Thank you for the additional time, sir.

Mr. Speaker: I thought I would be generous because I knew you would take it anyway. That completes members' statements.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I rise to report to the House on recent decisions and initiatives that will help

to improve employee and employer contact with the workers' compensation system in our province. As honourable members may know, about four million workers are covered by the system and approximately 187,000 employers pay premiums to it under the Workers' Compensation Act.

While the Workers' Compensation Board itself is the focal institution in the system, three other provincial agencies that were created through the major reform of the act in 1985 provide important programs at arm's length from the WCB. The Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal hears both employee and employer appeals of WCB compensation decisions, the office of the worker adviser provides advice and assistance to workers in their dealings with both the board and the tribunal and the office of the employer adviser provides such advice to employers.

In the 18 months since the offices of the worker adviser and employer adviser have been open, the value and popularity of their services have become evident. In that context, today I am pleased to tell the House that two new offices of the worker adviser, one in Timmins and one in Sault Ste. Marie, will be opened in late summer. In addition, a new office of the employer adviser in Hamilton is scheduled to open later this year. Beyond that, as the WCB's chairman, Dr. Elgie, announced last Tuesday, the board is establishing a regional office in Windsor that is scheduled to open early next year.

The establishment of the two new offices of the worker adviser will increase to 12 its number of locations in the province. In the financial year that has just ended, the OWA dealt with 14,000 cases. When it was originally established in the fall of 1985, it was anticipated that 6,000 workers would be served in the first year of operation.

The interest in the service provided by the office of the employer adviser has been equally impressive. The new OEA facilities opening this year expand to six the number of its locations throughout the province. Last year, the office served nearly 4,000 employers. In the current year, it is projecting a service load of 7,000 employers, which it estimates will include more than 5,000 new clients.

I think members will be particularly interested to know that three quarters of this new client group consists of businesses that employ fewer than 50 workers. So the office is clearly having positive implications for smaller business.

Finally, I note that the new regional office of the Workers' Compensation Board in Windsor, like other regional offices, will provide a full range of WCB services. These services will be directed not only to residents of the city but also to residents of Kent and Essex counties. In addition, the coverage area of the London regional office is being extended to serve Lambton county, including the city of Sarnia.

In announcing the establishment of the Windsor office, Dr. Elgie said WCB staff who live and work in the area are better attuned to both the needs and the resources of their community. That is undoubtedly the case for worker and employer advisers as well, and I look for the regionalization of these operations to continue providing enhanced and more effective services to workers and employers.

1350

GAS PIPELINES

Hon. Mr. Scott: I would like to advise the House that on April 30, 1987, the executive council referred to the Court of Appeal a question concerning the constitutional authority of this House to legislate in relation to intraprovincial gas pipelines.

Under the Constitution Act, 1867, constitutional authority to legislate in relation to pipelines is divided. The Parliament of Canada may enact laws regulating interprovincial and international pipelines and has done so in the National Energy Board Act, which gives the National Energy Board regulatory control over such pipelines. The legislatures of the provinces have legislative authority over intraprovincial pipelines and, in Ontario, legislation has been enacted which gives the Ontario Energy Board regulatory authority over those pipelines. Under this legislation, the Ontario Energy Board regulates the local distribution companies, such as Consumers' Gas Co., Union Gas Co. and ICG Utilities (Ontario) Ltd., which distribute gas from interprovincial and international pipelines to end users in the province.

In 1985, a company created by an end user in Ontario, Cyanamid Canada Pipeline Inc., applied to the National Energy Board for permission to build a bypass pipeline, situated wholly in Ontario, which would transport gas directly from an interprovincial pipeline to the end user's factory. Questions were raised before the National Energy Board concerning its constitutional authority over this bypass pipeline, and in a decision released in December 1986, the Nation-

al Energy Board found that it—that is, the federal power—had jurisdiction.

In 1986, the Ontario Energy Board conducted hearings into contract carriage arrangements. In the course of these hearings the Ontario Energy Board determined that it was necessary to decide the question of constitutional authority over bypass pipelines because of the impact that the existence of such bypass pipelines could have on rates. It therefore stated a case for the opinion of the Divisional Court, the Supreme Court of Ontario, pursuant to section 31 of the Ontario Energy Board Act. The stated case described a "typical" bypass pipeline. The Cyanamid proposal was an example of a "typical" bypass pipeline. On March 18, 1987, the Divisional Court gave its opinion that "typical" bypass pipelines were within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Ontario Energy Board.

Cyanamid had attempted unsuccessfully to quash the stated case and has applied to the Court of Appeal for leave to appeal the decision of the Divisional Court that it had jurisdiction to decide the question.

The Attorney General of Canada has applied to the Court of Appeal for leave to appeal the opinion of the Divisional Court on the stated case.

There is, however, some doubt as to whether there is an appeal to the Court of Appeal from the opinion of the Divisional Court in the stated case and further doubt as to whether the Attorney General of Canada, whose lawyers did not show up, not having participated in the Divisional Court proceedings, had a right of appeal on the constitutional issue.

It is extremely important—indeed, our whole legislation depends on it—and it is additionally important to the public interest in the supply and cost of natural gas in Ontario to clarify the jurisdiction of the Ontario Energy Board and the authority of this assembly to pass laws with respect to bypass pipelines. As the Ontario Energy Board stated in its written reasons:

"Bypass candidates are typically large-volume, high-load-factor users, which are located close to the TCPL [TransCanada PipeLines Ltd.] or an international pipeline. These customers are excellent load for the LDCs [local distribution companies]. The existence of these loads assists the local distribution companies to minimize gas purchase and system operating costs. If such loads leave the LDC, the LDCs could face much lower load factors, seasonal loads, increased costs and decreased system efficiency. In other words, the conditions neces-

sary for a death spiral"—and a death spiral, by the way, for the consumer—"may result."

It is essential, therefore, in the public interest that the issues raised concerning the legislative authority of the province in relation to bypass pipelines be settled authoritatively as soon as possible.

Therefore, pursuant to section 19 of the Courts of Justice Act, the Lieutenant Governor in Council has asked for the opinion of the Court of Appeal on the question of whether the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario has the authority, exclusive or otherwise, to pass laws in relation to the approval and regulation of the construction and operation of "typical" bypass pipelines. The hearing of the reference is likely to occur in early October of this year.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I thought it was the custom here that all statements should be given in either English or French.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

RESPONSES

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Gordon: I would like to respond to the statement of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) in the House today.

While we welcome the decentralization of further offices into the north, we are also concerned about the bureaucracy that seems to be involved now with hearings before these boards. At the present time, in my office and in the offices of other MPPs, we find that the number of Workers' Compensation Board cases we are dealing with has not gone down; as a matter of fact, it has increased. We are also being told by workers who go to the worker advisers that the worker advisers are backed up for months. Also, we are waiting for the so-called precedent-setting cases to be established, and then they will be hearing other cases.

I would think too that with the number of employers seeking advice from the employer adviser, what it all points to is that the whole WCB system is breaking down. We on this side of the House believe the government should establish a royal commission to look at the WCB. It is completely out of hand and is becoming increasingly bureaucratic every day. It is not serving the workers in Ontario; neither is it serving the employers.

GAS PIPELINES

Mr. Andrewes: I want to thank the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) for his lecture and historical

update on how his government proposes to bypass gas. We had anticipated he might rise in his place and deal with the matter of conflict of interest for the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine), as he had committed himself to do yesterday. That obviously was not his choice today.

It does give me an opportunity to raise one other issue; that is the ambiguity of this government and the whole question of energy policy on the natural gas commodity. The Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio), through the Ontario Energy Board, sent a very clear message to gas consumers in this province that by using brokers and by taking advantage of that decision by the Ontario Energy Board, they would be able to avail themselves of cheaper natural gas and thereby increase their productivity, increase the inherent value of their product and assist the economy of the province.

The authority of these agents would be to act on behalf of major buyers like school boards, hospitals and other major institutions in Ontario. The confusing part about this statement and the ambiguity of the government's program arises from the visit of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to western Canada, during which he clearly stated to Alberta gas producers that this perhaps was not a good idea and that this perhaps was not in the best interests of Alberta and the gas producers in Alberta. It was in the best interests of Ontario consumers but might not be in the best interests of Alberta gas producers.

He suggested that the government might review the decision of the Ontario Energy Board and step back from this decision. The ambiguity is confusing. I ask that the government clearly state whether or not it thinks Ontarians are paying too little for western gas.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Morin-Strom: I would like to congratulate the government on finally making the announcement that worker adviser offices are being located in the communities of Sault Ste. Marie and Timmins. This is certainly an office we have advocated for a period of nearly a year now and have worked very hard to get located in the area of Sault Ste. Marie. Thanks have to go to the Steelworkers, particularly in Sault Ste. Marie, and many of the other worker advocates who have been working so hard to get that office established in the Sault.

The office is of extreme benefit to the workers because the bureaucracy they face in having to deal with the Workers' Compensation Board is

an immense problem for all injured workers in this province. While they have been providing good service in Sudbury, we will very much appreciate their locating in Sault Ste. Marie and getting workers' advisers located in our community.

1400

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I also would like to respond very briefly to the statement by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). I think we are into a new process now. Last week, we had the announcement of the regional office in Windsor. Today, we have the reannouncement of the office in Windsor. Some time in the future, we might have a sod turning for a facility in Windsor, and after that we could have a ribbon cutting.

We should be very clear that the announcement of the regional office of the Workers' Compensation Board in Windsor is not for May 1987; it is for some time in 1988. I suggest that the announcement was made last week for one reason, and that is because we are in a pre-election period and the minister wanted to make sure he had announced the regional office before the election.

I am appreciative that we are going to have a regional office, but the reason we are going to have that regional office is not because of the Minister of Labour. The reality is that when the Hamilton office and other regional offices were announced, the Minister of Labour said our case load in Windsor was too small. We are getting a regional office in Windsor because the Minister of Labour has felt the heat from the labour community, my colleague the member for Essex North (Mr. Hayes) and myself.

We are thankful we are going to get that office, and we are going to turn up the heat on further reforms of the Workers' Compensation Board so that people do not get the kinds of hassles they have been getting in this province for years under Tory rule and now under Liberal rule when they are trying to get workers' compensation benefits.

Mr. Wildman: Like my colleague the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom), I welcome the establishment of the workers' adviser office in the Sault, but I want to point out to the minister that the distances between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury are just as great for people trying to contact the Workers' Compensation Board office in Sudbury, and I hope he will finally move to establish a regional workers' compensation office in Sault Ste. Marie, as well as the workers' adviser office, so we can at least have injured workers able to contact the local office rather than have to travel halfway across

the province in order to get their problems dealt with.

GAS PIPELINES

Mr. Rae: I want to reply briefly to the statement by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) and say that it is not simply a legal problem; there is also a problem of policy. I say to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) that the government of Ontario has to make up its mind with respect to which consumers are going to benefit, how are they going to benefit from lower gas prices and how much lower does Ontario want gas prices to be in the light of its very legitimate feelings with respect to our long-term relationship with Alberta. That is the ambiguity, the problem and the confusion.

Yes, there is a jurisdictional problem, a constitutional problem and a legal one, the question of who will regulate. Once we have determined who will regulate, we still have to hear from the government as to how it will regulate, because it is not simply Consumers' Gas and other gas companies whose interests are affected; it is also the ordinary consumers of Ontario who, I dare say to the minister, have yet to benefit as dramatically as many of us feel they should be benefiting from the decline in gas prices around the world.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Premier. I wonder if the Premier could explain to this House why, in allocating the funding for this year, he authorized an expenditure of capital in the education area to the public schools somewhat less than the allocation to the separate schools. Why would he have used public school funding and shifted it over to support the separate schools? That was not the deal.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am delighted to have the opportunity to respond to the Leader of the Opposition because, as the statement made in this House some seven or eight days ago made clear, our most recent capital allocation to school boards in this province is the largest in recent memory as I recall it. The allocation of \$226.4 million is the largest capital allocation since the early 1970s. We have tripled the allocation provided during my friend's last year in office. While we have not addressed all the concerns in the school community, with this allocation we have moved forward very significantly by

addressing some 360 projects in some 110 to 115 school jurisdictions.

Mr. Grossman: Perhaps the Minister of Education did not hear the question while he was explaining to the Premier how the Premier might explain having called the former Premier a potential criminal in this province, so I will come back and repeat the question for the Minister of Education.

We have been trying to get from the minister for some weeks a division of the \$226 million he announced a couple of weeks ago. Only after extensive calls to his ministry were we able finally to get them to agree to share with us the figures that the minister should have made available right from the start. Those figures indicate that the public school system will get in capital not \$226 million but \$97 million only, and that the separate school system will get \$30 million more, that is \$129 million, for capital.

With the majority of money going to the separate school system and with so many public school children still going to school in portables and not getting any of this assistance until 1988, how can anyone escape the conclusion that the government has simply moved money from the public school system over to the separate school system?

Hon. Mr. Conway: I find it interesting that the Leader of the Opposition, who tolerated some 4,000 portables while he was Minister of Education, would complain. I find it strange that this man who did so little while he was Treasurer, while he turned the screws on the school community, would complain about this government's very considerable advance in its first two years of office to address the decade of neglect that the previous administration left for it to face.

Specifically, I want to say to my friend the Leader of the Opposition that we have a process that is fair to both public and separate school systems. It is no secret, as my friend the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens) might tell the Leader of the Opposition, that boards such as the York Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board are undergoing some of the most dramatic enrolment growth anywhere in the country, and to some degree it has to be understood that the capital dollars will follow that growth. By and large, there has been more significant growth in a number of the separate school jurisdictions than in the corresponding public boards.

I want to add again that we have provided vastly more money to the public school system through this capital allocation than the niggardly,

miserable underfunding provided by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Grossman: This government chose to bring in 19 tax increases which, together with growth in the economy, have produced for this government \$4.75 billion in additional revenue in the two years it has been in office. With that \$4.75 billion in additional resources at hand, it has chosen not to meet the public demand of \$630 million on the public school side but instead only \$97 million, while it has devoted \$129 million to the separate schools.

We know the minister has more money at hand and we know he has spent more money at hand. My simple question to him is, why did he choose to take money which otherwise might have been available to eliminate the portables in the public school system and shift it over to the separate side, instead of putting adequate money into both? That is what he has done.

Hon. Mr. Conway: It is hard to understand the calisthenics of the Leader of the Opposition, who has given opposition economics a new lease on life that I would not have imagined possible, given his long and distinguished career on the Treasury bench. I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that we as a government have moved forward to provide substantially—

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I say to my friend the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), I hear the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis) is out knocking on doors. It is obvious that the doors are knocking back at him. I want to say to the Leader of the Opposition that we have responded with very significant capital allocations, but we are also prudent managers. We are not going to throw money around with reckless abandon.

Mr. Grossman: The minister has broken faith with the public school system and the public school boards across this province.

1410

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Premier. In his absence yesterday, while he was announcing the name for the new domed stadium and calling the former Premier of this province a potential criminal, we were here in this Legislature talking about insurance rates and other more important matters.

One of those things was a continuation of instant policy development by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter). While the

Premier is with us today, we thought he might help us sort out a contradiction yet again.

The minister said yesterday, and I quote, "When the rate review board is set up, and when it reports, we will deal with its recommendations." That was in response to a question from me as to whether the government will have the power to overrule the rate review board. The minister said, "we will deal with its recommendations."

In answer to a supplementary he said, "It will make its recommendations to the government and we will act on them."

Subsequently, this morning we were surprised to read the following quote offered to a *Globe and Mail* reporter—

Mr. Speaker: By way of question, I hope.

Mr. Grossman: Does the Premier endorse the statement made in the House yesterday by his minister or does he endorse the statement made to the *Globe and Mail* by the same minister which indicates that if the rate review board rules on a rate and the applicant is unhappy with it, he has access to judicial review but that it would not be reviewed by the government? Does the Premier support the statement made in the House by the minister yesterday afternoon or the minister's quote in the *Globe and Mail* this morning?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I have every confidence in the minister. I will refer the question to the honourable minister.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: On April 23, I made an announcement that this would be an independent rate review board. That is the case. It will make its determinations and anyone who objects to them will have access to judicial review.

Mr. Grossman: I take it then that the minister's answer here yesterday afternoon, which indicated that the government would deal with the recommendations of the rate review board, was, with respect, yet another answer which was, shall we say kindly, either ill-thought-out or not so accurate as to reflect the government's plans.

That being the case, let me take him back to where this debate began, and that is to the simple question: If the formula that the minister himself talked about, of allowing the insurance companies to move to a break-even situation and perhaps make as much as three per cent return on investment, is applied and the rate review board thus kicks out an average increase in insurance rates of 4.4 to 7.5 per cent, do I take it from his answer that this will become the rate review

board approved rate and that he will do nothing about it?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I replied to the Leader of the Opposition yesterday and I will repeat it today. There are many components in rate setting. This is one in a series of things we are addressing. We are going to look at no-fault insurance, at automobile repairs and at tort reform. We are going to look at all the components that make up that premium and it is our hope and expectation that rates will come down as a result of this.

Mr. Grossman: The minister made an announcement several weeks ago of urgent changes he was going to bring in. He indicated that the legislation was going to be introduced this month—we have not seen it yet—and that he hoped it would be passed this session. All that will occur before the Osborne report is in to deal with no-fault insurance itself. How can he suggest to the House this afternoon that no-fault insurance and a variety of other things he just rhymed off are going to form part of the rate review board's determination when it is his announced intention to have the rate review board up and running and in place long before he has even had the report, let alone acted on it?

What is his government's policy? Is it or is it not the case that if the rate review board finds that insurance companies are losing money now and allows them to break even or make a Monte-Kwinter-approved profit, he will authorize and allow the rate review board to approve an increase in insurance rates?

Mr. Speaker: The minister.

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: Do not fog it up with no-fault insurance. He said he would have the board in first.

Mr. Speaker: Order; the minister.

Mr. Grossman: He should step up and explain what his policy is.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: We have never promised a quick fix; never. The member has suddenly discovered the issue. For a year, he has sat on his rear end and watched the play go on. He now has discovered the issue. I ask him a question: where does he stand on this issue? Is he in favour of or opposed to a rate review board?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Leader of the Opposition has asked his questions. The member for York South with a new question.

Mr. Rae: If the minister stole his program from the Tory party, all I can say is that it is theft under \$200.

The Minister of Financial Institutions on April 23 at 4 o'clock in the afternoon announced a cap that was then reported as a freeze. Can he comment on the situation affecting George Hughes, a retired Toronto Transit Commission driver who heard about the minister's announcement?

He is living on a pension that went up four per cent this past year. He has a clean driving record. Scottish and York is his insurance company. It sent him a renewal notice for June 1, which is some time after the minister's famous freezing announcement when he took on the insurance companies and brought them to their knees. He has found that his renewal notice has increased his premium from \$359 to \$556, which we calculate to be a 55 per cent increase.

Can the minister comment on Mr. Hughes's situation and explain how he could have received a 55 per cent increase when the minister was supposed to have capped those premiums on April 23?

1420

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The leader of the third party has, as usual, indicated that he does not understand how the insurance industry works.

On April 23, we froze the insurance rate as of April 23. If someone had a premium due on April 22, that would not impact on it. If he had a premium due on April 25, that did not mean we froze the insurance rates for everybody for a year prior to it. It was April 23.

I do not know the exact details of the case history the member just mentioned, but if it was after a year the individual would expect whatever increase was accumulated over that year. I also do not know if there was any change in his driving record. The member would have to send me the case and we will look at it, but that is the basis. On April 23, the rates were capped, not a year before April 23.

Mr. Rae: I want the minister to know that any time he wants to go to the public and ask the question, "Who understands insurance, Monte Kwinter or the people on the street who are being shafted by the insurance companies of this province?" I will take the people over the Minister of Financial Institutions any day of the week.

Here is another case. They are streaming in, and I say to the minister that the increases have not stopped as a result of his announcement. Mr. Cohen lives in Scarborough, and the insurance

for him and his wife jumped from \$1,500 to \$2,400. That was again an increase announcement that took place after the minister's so-called freeze. People are getting jerked around.

Precisely what instructions has the minister issued to the insurance companies with respect to the kind of increases that are being permitted after his announcement on April 23? What written instructions has he given to the insurance companies with respect to increases that are going on right now?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I will repeat again that the rates in Ontario for automobile insurance have been capped as of April 23. That means whatever rate was in effect on April 23, 1987, it cannot be increased. That does not prevent someone from being put into another category if he had many accidents or if he had traffic tickets. We are not going to cap people back a year prior to that date. April 23 is the effective date.

Mr. Swart: It is perfectly obvious that the minister has not sent out any instructions whatsoever to the insurance companies.

I want to bring to the minister's attention another case, that of Art Whitaker, 260 Wellesley Street East, who had a 32 per cent increase on his insurance rate when he renewed it on May 8. In 19 years of driving, he never had an accident or lost a point. When the insurance company refused to reduce the premium, he called the office of the superintendent of insurance and he was told to pay it and that the rate review board might order it refunded at some future date.

How can the minister condone that kind of action by his officials? Why does he not just admit that his whole statement was a sham for political purposes before an election and has no meaning whatsoever?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member for Welland-Thorold, in his usual blustery way, is trying to cover up what is going to provide a reasonable, fair system for the people of Ontario. We will have an insurance advocate who will be able to make representations on the part of those people who feel they have been unjustly treated; we are going to have a rate review board; we are looking at tort reform; we are looking at automobile repairs; we are looking at all the things that make up insurance rates.

I can tell the member that this government is concerned about the problem. We are addressing it in a reasonable way. If he feels we are not moving quickly enough, that is something he is going to have to deal with. We are working in a responsible way.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Rae: I want to go back to the Minister of Labour about the report yesterday with respect to gold miners and the relationship between mining and lung cancer. Dr. Ham's report is extremely important because it sets a precedent for a number of workers who are exposed to substances.

As the minister will know, it is the general consensus, and indeed the minister is quoted as saying at a number of meetings I know he has had, that he regards the question of occupational disease as being a ticking time bomb.

If the minister really feels it is a ticking time bomb, is he satisfied with the precedent set by this initial report, which makes it virtually impossible for anyone alive today, or a survivor of a miner, to get any kind of compensation? This puts all the burden on the individual worker and on the family and not on the Workers' Compensation Board. It reverses the whole theory of the fact that the burden of proof is supposed to be with the board and not with the worker. Is the minister satisfied the right precedent is being set by this particular report with respect to lung cancer and mining?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I think the honourable member will want to acknowledge that this is the initial effort by the Industrial Disease Standards Panel. It is the first time a scientific body such as this has attempted in a scientific way and, I might add, in an independent way, to offer advice to the Workers' Compensation Board. The makeup of the IDSP includes academics, scientists, members of the business community and members of the trade union movement. I think it is an excellent panel.

I am disappointed that the honourable gentleman is apparently not willing to allow the process to work its way through the system. There is a process in place. It seems to me the IDSP has made a first scientific finding on this matter and we should now wait until the Workers' Compensation Board makes its determination, based on the findings of the panel and the additional help that Dr. Muller provided in his report to the WCB.

The member raises the issue of benefit of the doubt. Certainly, the board may decide, notwithstanding the views of the panel, to extend a greater provision of benefit of the doubt.

Mr. Rae: I am going to be blunt with the minister. What the hell kind of science is it that says on the one hand there is a relationship between working as a miner and lung cancer and says on the other hand, "But we are not going to

be able to provide compensation to anybody because we are going to create rules that are so utterly ridiculous and fantastic that no individual can actually apply and get any kind of benefit"? What kind of science is that?

Is the Minister of Labour standing in his place saying he approves of a report which has the effect of transferring the entire burden of proof on to the family, makes it impossible for that family to ever get compensation and which leaves widows and orphans and children and families out in the cold while the minister stands behind this so-called science? This is not science. This is absolute bunk when it comes to protecting working people. The minister ought to know that if he is in the business of protecting working people in this province.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I am sorry the honourable gentleman feels the work of a panel which is headed by as eminent a gentleman as Dr. James Ham, who is one of the authors of the majority report, is bunk. That is the opinion of the leader of the third party; it is clearly not the opinion of Dr. Ham or of some of the other signatories of the majority report. I say to my honourable friend that those individual members of the panel have just a touch more scientific founding than either he or I.

Mr. Pouliot: I have worked 20 years in a mine. Twice I have suffered cyanide poisoning. Not unlike Methuselah, I should have worked an additional 40 years. I really cannot believe this. More important, I am speaking here on behalf of my colleagues who are extracting minerals all across this province. What the minister is telling them—and I could not care less, with due respect, about the kind of expertise he has summoned—is that they would need 60 years of occupational exposure to establish recognition. It does not make any sense under any science.

One last time, I am asking the minister if he will dissociate himself from these kinds of criteria, which are not enforceable. It does not make any sense to expect someone to work 60 years in order to be compensable. Will he come to his senses and give us something that is logical, that has clout and that we can individually and collectively live with?

1430

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I would say to the honourable gentleman, who I know feels very strongly on this issue, that the Industrial Disease Standards Panel was set up to offer independent advice to the Workers' Compensation Board. I think the honourable member would agree with me that in its makeup, the panel has a good

balance between the various interests in this area. At the end of its deliberations on this matter, the panel has provided independent advice for the Workers' Compensation Board. The board can choose to accept or reject any or all of that advice.

We have in place a process of independent review, and now the honourable gentleman stands in his place and says there ought to be political interference. I wonder whether he would be so quick to suggest political interference had the advice been in the other direction. I think it is wise to allow this independent process to work and to allow the Workers' Compensation Board to make the determination that it will make later this summer.

Mr. Pouliot: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I have been quoted in error by the minister. With respect, all I was referring to was the eligibility rules that are not applicable. I never once mentioned political interference, patronage or any such thing. He owes me an apology. He has quoted me in error.

Mr. Speaker: New question.

ACID RAIN

Mr. Gillies: I have a question of the Minister for the Environment. He has now had an opportunity to review the report of the select committee on the environment, particularly with regard to the Ontario Hydro banking provisions.

For some months, the minister has stood behind the committee report, saying he would not act on the question of Hydro banking, its right to emit hydrocarbon emissions in excess of the regulation, until he had the committee report. He now has the report. Will he agree with the unanimous report and scrap that provision of his acid rain program?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I have had an opportunity to have a first glance at the report, and I think some of the suggestions that are found in it are very helpful. I think it speaks well of—the member alludes to this—the three-party input.

I indicated yesterday in the House, in answer to questions from the leader of the third party and the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier), that I would be looking at it myself, that I would be discussing it with the officials of the Ministry of the Environment and that I would discuss it with my cabinet colleagues to look at the ramifications of each one of the recommendations, keeping in mind, as I know the member will, that the program as it stands at present has an absolute cut of 67 per cent of the emissions from the four

major polluters in the province and 60 per cent overall from all sources in Ontario.

I suggested yesterday in the House that if there were ways in which the regulation could be improved, I was willing to consider those, and I want to assure the member that I and my officials and others are looking at the provisions of the report with a view to improving it, if that can be done.

Mr. Gillies: I want to direct the minister specifically to the question of banking emissions for Hydro. Will the minister consider that some of his regulations are being met in this regard simply because production is down? It is down at Inco and with some of the other emitters, when in fact if full production were going on some of these sources would be emitting more than the regulation allows.

Now he has the opportunity, with one government-controlled agency, to eliminate a provision which we believe hurts the minister's credibility in dealing with the Americans on the question of acid rain. It is an all-party report; it is unanimous. The minister knows that the Hydro banking provision was wrong. Will he now correct the mistake he made and remove regulation 662/85 immediately?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: First of all, I find it passing interesting that a member of that political party could be lecturing the government on the manner in which it has handled acid rain. I have sat in this Legislature for 10 years and I have watched the way that party dealt with acid rain. I watched how they did not have an acid rain program to bring before the Legislative Assembly. Now we have an acid rain program in effect which, when it is discussed with others outside of this jurisdiction, they refer to as a very good program, a program which I have pointed out to the member has an absolute reduction of 67 per cent for those four major polluters that his party would not touch.

Mr. Gillies: What about Congressman Dingell? He says you are all talk and no action.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: If the member wishes to ally himself with that particular individual on the issue of acid rain, he can go ahead.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. If the members would allow it, other members would like to ask questions. New question, the member for Riverdale.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Reville: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. On December 16, 1985, the

government promised "a much more effective system of rent review." Let us take a look. As of April 30, 1987, there were 18,532 applications for rent review on file, 10,475 of which were applications for retroactive justification of 1985 and 1986 increases. Not one application has been processed. Incredibly, the CRS-1 forms, the cost-revenue statement forms, were received only this week.

Will the minister kindly tell tenants waiting for rebates on rents they paid almost two years ago just how his new system is so much more effective?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As usual, the New Democratic Party's statistics are completely way out of whack. The honourable member said the process came into being in December and then he said people are waiting two years for rebates. Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker: from December to now is about five months if you calculate it, yet the member said these folks are waiting two years for rebates.

There was no system in place two years ago. We acted very aggressively, with purpose and deliberation, to bring a program into being. As we move very quickly to bring this process into being, all the forms are now in place; and as the member said, we have had all these appeals. In the past, there were no provisions for tenants living in post-1975 buildings to make their positions before a board. This is being done, and we are moving as quickly as we can.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Reville: The figures I am quoting were provided by the rent review services office, but there is more. The government promised a maintenance board, but no appointments have been made. The government promised a rent registry, but it will not work until the end of the summer. The government promised to crack down on key money, but the government has one, count him, inspector policing key money. When can tenants expect to get more from this minister than hot air and jokes with no punch line?

Hon. Mr. Curling: If there is one thing the NDP itself is consistent about, it is rhetoric and nice lines. If there is one thing the Liberal government can do, it is deliver—and we can do that very well—on all the commitments we have promised in throne speeches or in policies themselves.

Very shortly—as a matter of fact, in days—I will be announcing the maintenance board members,

and the member will be very pleased to know the kind of calibre we have attracted because of our commitment to that maintenance board. The member also will be extremely impressed at the kind of recommendations we got and the type of policy we have put in place. We are working very well.

As a matter of fact, I want to thank the member for asking me the question. For a moment, I thought that I was the Maytag repairman, that they would not ask about our policy. But things are working very well.

1440

MINING ACCIDENT

Mr. Speaker: The Attorney General has a response to a question previously asked by the member for York South (Mr. Rae).

Hon. Mr. Scott: On May 6, the leader of the third party asked me if I would give consideration to staying a charge that has been laid under the Criminal Code against a citizen of Sudbury as a result of the mine cave-in. The following day, his colleague the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) asked me if I would consider withdrawing that charge. As a result of those two inquiries, which I undertook to look into, the officials of my department have met with the Sudbury police and other persons who have been investigating the matter.

I should tell the House that in my answer the other day, I indicated I would have made a determination about whether a stay or a withdrawal should occur by this week. I do not think I will be able to do that. There are in fact a number of other witnesses who I believe should be interviewed. It is my present direction that those interviews should be conducted as quickly but as thoroughly as possible. I anticipate that I will be able to report to the House about the request the two honourable members have made either at the end of next week or early the following week.

Mr. Rae: I am troubled, because the implication of what the Attorney General is saying—and I do not want to be unfair to anybody in the circumstances—is that there are people who have information relevant to a very serious charge under the Criminal Code who were not interviewed, and yet a charge was laid.

In particular, I wonder if the Attorney General can tell us whether sufficiently senior officials knowledgeable of mining practices across the province were interviewed by the police carrying out the investigation prior to the charge being laid so that some determination could have been made as to whether there was a common

understanding as to what the standard of practice was across the province before a charge of this importance was laid against the individual involved. I am sure the Attorney General will appreciate that this kind of charge has an extremely serious impact on the individual involved and on his family. We are entitled to know whether the people who should have been interviewed have yet been interviewed.

Hon. Mr. Scott: The honourable member is of course right. The charge is a very serious one, one of the most serious ones under the Criminal Code. To lay it was a responsibility that was taken very seriously by the police in the city of Sudbury. At the moment, I have no complaint of their conduct, in legal terms. I was asked to review it to see if I would exercise a judicial responsibility—which is not a political responsibility—either to stay it or to withdraw it. That is an equally serious thing to do. I simply say to the honourable member that before undertaking either to do it or not to do it and reporting to the House, I regard it as critical that everybody who may have something useful to add to the matter should be interviewed and heard. It is with that in mind that I have asked these other interviews to be conducted.

Mr. Gordon: My question is to the Attorney General. Certainly none of us in this House, nor the public, is going to say that the charges are not serious and that this is not a serious matter. At the same time, the facts of the matter are that charges were laid before a public inquest was held. If we had had that public inquest, of course we would know more about the facts and some of the things that could be done in the future to avoid an accident such as the one that happened.

What I want to ask the Attorney General is whether it is not true that in a case like this, where he is laying the blame on a worker before a public inquest is held, he is shifting the responsibility for what happens in that work place, in that environment where workers have very little control, on to the workers, and that in actual fact, if he does not stay this charge, what he is going to be doing is taking away the burden of responsibility that should also lie on the backs of employers.

Hon. Mr. Scott: Frankly, I do not accept the premise behind the honourable member's question. The presumption of innocence is real. This accused, like any other accused, simply faces the assertion of the police and perhaps the crown attorney that they believe they can prove a conviction, but he is presumed to be innocent in the eyes of all honourable members and of the

general public until that evidence is led and a judge or a jury makes a finding on it. That is point one.

Point two is that the member is quite wrong. It is usual to lay criminal charges before an inquest if there is sufficient evidence. The reason for that historically is to protect the accused person from the atmosphere that may be created in a community by the occurrence of an inquest at which evidence is led, including his own evidence—because he can be called to give evidence at an inquest—which may affect a subsequent trial. It is for that reason that the best practice, if the evidence exists, is to lay the charge and proceed with it first.

Mr. Gordon: Certainly, no one is going to deny the seriousness or the gravity of this matter. At the same time, there is an opinion out there that what is happening here by not staying those charges is that the blame is going to be laid on the backs of workers across Ontario whenever an accident occurs in the work place. Workers are going to bear the responsibility, no matter what, for the environment, for the type of equipment they work with and for the variety of other areas whereby accidents can happen.

This is a really serious concern. I think it has been pointed out in the House the number of times workers have been charged in this province. I think there is only one other instance. Is the minister prepared to stay those charges?

Hon. Mr. Scott: We will not make politics of this, I am certain. As the member knows and has emphasized, to lay a charge as the police do when they swear an information is a critically important matter. To withdraw a charge is an equally important matter. Whether the police proceeded appropriately or not, at this stage I cannot say. What I do say is that I am going to proceed as carefully and as prudently as I can before I take the important step of withdrawing a charge.

As much as I would like to curry favour with the honourable member and do something to suit him right today, I am not going to. I am going to take the time to make sure that this decision is as right and as just as we can make it.

ONTARIO HYDRO

Mr. Charlton: I have a question for the Premier. He and his colleagues have repeatedly stated over the years in this House the need to bring Ontario Hydro under control and to make Ontario Hydro accountable to this Legislature.

On March 26, 1984, the Premier said: "That same accountability runs through Ontario Hydro. We have been very specific in this House about

how we would bring Ontario Hydro back into a system of accountability to this House.” He seemed at that time to be very clear in his mind about what needed to be done. Could the Premier tell us what changes his government has made in its relationship with Ontario Hydro, in Hydro structures and in the Power Corporation Act to bring Hydro back into this system of accountability that he talked about?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The honourable member is quite right. We have not brought the Power Corporation Act into this House. One of the reasons, among others, is that the House agenda is now so crowded that it is very difficult to do the things we have introduced, even last year. That is the reality of the situation. We are having emergency debates almost every day. We have throne speeches, budgets delayed and that kind of thing.

Mr. Davis: I am prepared to sit all summer to get the agenda done.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I bet you are.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think that if my honourable friend would look at the substance of what has happened with Ontario Hydro, he would find some very significant changes in policy with respect to cogeneration, smaller-scale hydraulic development and many others that I think have put a major stamp on the new direction of Ontario Hydro.

Mr. Charlton: We have heard about the policy changes which the Premier referred to in terms of rhetoric, but we have seen little of them in terms of actual implemented policy. Last July, the select committee on energy tabled its report in this House and made more than 20 recommendations, the bulk of which dealt with the structure of Ontario Hydro, the relationship of Hydro to government and the regulation of Hydro by the Ontario Energy Board. The government has not even had the policy clarity to comment on those recommendations, let alone bring in legislation to make the changes. When can we expect to hear the government’s position on the select committee’s recommendations?

1450

Hon. Mr. Peterson: Let me say to my honourable friend that I do not think he has been observing it that closely if that is the conclusion he has come to. If he looks at the substance of the changes at Ontario Hydro, he will agree that there have been a number of very significant changes in policy direction. Obviously, there are more things left to do, but I do not think my

friend’s characterization is either accurate or charitable in the circumstances. The minister has made major changes, and I think the member would want to stand in this House and give him credit for so doing.

TIMBER CUTTING LICENCE

Hon. Mr. Scott: Yesterday, the member for Oakville (Mr. O’Connor) asked about the extent to which the issuance of a timber cutting licence under the Hearst forest management agreement would be in breach of the proposed legislation introduced to the House by the government to regulate conflict of interest. I think the point to be noted about this is that the FMA was authorized some time ago by cabinet and was approved by a committee composed of Wilfrid Spooner, whose name must reverberate across this House, and Professor Baskerville of the University of New Brunswick.

After reviewing all the facts, which included the fact that United Sawmill, a company in which a member of this House had an interest, would be a participant in the FMA, Mr. Spooner, out of his wealth of experience, and Professor Baskerville said: “Further delay in signing this technically sound document is likely to result in some loss of commitment to forest management on the part of all players, some loss of credibility of the ministry, and more significantly, in the loss of an operating year in coming to grips with serious local wood supply problems. We therefore recommend that the Hearst FMA be signed as quickly as possible.” It was and the leases were issued.

Mr. O’Connor: Those facts are completely incorrect. The awarding of the FMA was made within the past several weeks, as was announced by the government in the paper over the past two weeks. I have sent over to the Attorney General a copy of his own legislation, Bill 23, and I refer him to clause 6(1)(a) which indicates that, “The executive council...shall not knowingly, (a) award or approve a contract...to, a former member of the executive council” within 12 months of his having sat as a member of the executive council.

The member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) was a member of the executive council until the end of June 1986. The contract was formally awarded to him within the past three weeks, well within that 12-month period. How does the Attorney General possibly get around his own guidelines, his own legislation, clause 6(1)(a)?

Hon. Mr. Scott: Now we should come to the matter. The honourable member will know that if the Members' Conflict of Interest Act we have proposed is passed—we cannot get to it because of the obfuscation going on here—there will then be in this Legislature two acts that deal with conflict of interest and that are designed to work together, side by side. The first will be the conflict of interest act, which will make certain things unlawful. The second is the Legislative Assembly Act, the cornerstone of this Legislature, which makes other acts unlawful.

As the member will know, there is nothing in either act that prevents the entry into this contract. The member refers to section 6 of the conflict of interest act. If he refers to subsection 6(3), he will see that covers this very point, but the interesting thing is that if he looks at the Legislative Assembly Act, he will see by section 11 that this very contract is contemplated because it permits a member of the Legislature to sit, notwithstanding that he holds a licensed permit or permission for cutting timber. That not only provides the answer to the member; it makes it clear that the Legislative Assembly Act contemplates the very thing that happened.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We are getting into a debate.

TARIFFS ON SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Pope: My question is of the Premier about a matter affecting hundreds of jobs in northern Ontario, that is, the softwood lumber issue.

Last October, the Premier was interviewed by Robert Sheppard and Kimberley Noble for the *Globe and Mail*. That story appeared in the Tuesday, October 21, 1986, edition of the *Globe*. There are two statements attributed to the Premier in that article: first, "Premier David Peterson said his government had not realized Ottawa's intention to increase lumber industry fees until 'we read about in the newspaper'"; second, "Both Mr. Peterson and industry minister Hugh O'Neil said in the Legislature that the announcement was made without the prior knowledge of the Ontario government."

Are those statements true?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I am not sure exactly what horse, alive or dead, my honourable friend is flogging at the moment. It seems to me that we have gone through this at great length. With his selective editing, I cannot comment on the situation. We have discussed this issue interminably in the House, and I am prepared to go

through and discuss it again if he would like to do so.

We have discussed how Miss Carnie and Mr. Vander Zalm became involved in issuing a statement with respect to the original situation on softwood, that there was a reluctant agreement and then the 15 per cent came along and we had real problems with that. I am not sure whether my friend needs more explanation of that.

Mr. Pope: I thought it was a rather straightforward answer from a Premier who does not want to give straightforward answers. Yes or no? Is it true or not?

Let us presume that the Premier said his words were true, that he told the truth last October. Can he explain the fact that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) is reported in the *Iroquois Falls Enterprise* as telling Jeff Nash, the reporter and editor, that he ordered the lumber tax to be imposed on Ontario industries? Can the Premier explain that, in the light of his comments last October 20? Are his comments true or not, in the light of what the minister said in *Iroquois Falls*?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I have not read that particular newspaper. I do not know what its comments are. Why does the member not ask the minister what he said? The member knows what I have said consistently throughout. He can ask the minister any time he would like to do so.

TIMBER SCALING PRACTICES

Mr. Pouliot: I have a question of the Minister of Natural Resources. The minister will recall that on April 30, I rose in this House and asked that something be done to regulate the antics of one Ken Buchanan. As of last Monday, yesterday, we now have 100 workers from Caramat and Manitouwadge, my own town, who are taking on an illegal strike. What is at issue is scaling, measuring wood. The discrepancy between Buchanan's scaler and a scaler with 30 years' experience hired by the workers is somewhere between 30 per cent and 50 per cent.

The minister's duty is to collect stumpage on every cord of wood that is cut in Ontario. In order to defuse tension and resolve the dispute, will he commission government scalers to be on the site tomorrow, or at his earliest convenience, so we can find out who is telling the truth in this affair, Buchanan or the workers?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Certainly, I am prepared to address the problem. One of the very first initiatives that I, as minister, had to take was when I inherited the planting program from the former government and found that some of our

planters were not paid for their work. I took the initiative immediately, particularly to protect those young people and guarantee their wages.

The other thing I want to bring into account here is the fact that I am very much willing to examine those things where there is some discrepancy about the wood that is cut, how it is measured and how we have to relate to the workers on that end of it. Yes, I am prepared to examine it immediately and get back to the member on that issue.

1500

Mr. Pouliot: I certainly appreciate the commitment from the minister. While I am at it, the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) is not here, but we want to wish him well. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) has left the chamber. Last week, I was talking about workers' compensation arrears of \$2 million. We have some 200 infractions. I am still talking about Ken Buchanan. Under MTC we know what is going on within an hour. What we do not know, and we are beginning to be suspicious about, is who is protecting whom. That language is not too strong.

By way of a supplementary, will the Minister of Natural Resources commission an inquiry to be conducted so that these kinds of people, the likes of Mr. Buchanan, will no longer be given the opportunity to bypass almost every rule in the book to exploit people? He is doing nothing short of that. We want to know who is boss in this affair. Does he control crown land or does the minister?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I have given the member the undertaking that I will examine this issue immediately. It is one that I am not prepared to live with. I want to protect the foresters right through the whole program from planting to harvesting. I think the point is well made. I shall address myself to the question and get back to the member.

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: In response to my question on Monday, the Minister of Revenue stated, in reference to the market value assessment study that has been carried out by his ministry officials, "It is an excellent report." On the basis of that response, could the minister confirm whether he has read the report?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have the greatest confidence in the people who did the work. As far as I am concerned, their assessments of property are infallible and among the best one can reach anywhere.

I see the honourable member has finally put his question about the number of people involved in Orders and Notices. I believe the assessors were brought in from Hamilton and a couple of other centres to assist the head office authorities, and that particular material has been forwarded to the Metropolitan council government.

I have not read the report because it would not make any sense to me. I am talking about the qualifications of those who prepared it.

Mr. McFadden: In regard to the meaning of the words "excellent report," in clarification of the meaning of the minister's comment yesterday, he was referring to excellent in terms of what he assumed his staff was doing rather than excellent in terms of the result for the taxpayers of Metropolitan Toronto or his conclusions about that result. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The decisions in that regard still lie with the Metropolitan council. They, too, are elected and they requested the report. The report was prepared in good time, precisely along the outlines they requested, and it is now in their hands.

PENSION FUNDS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations in the remaining 35 seconds. The minister will be aware that despite the moratorium he imposed earlier this year on the theft of so-called surplus pension funds from pension plans, Ontario Hydro has been allowed by the Supreme Court to withdraw \$73.5 million from the so-called surplus accounts of the Hydro workers by writing it off against their 1986 pension contributions.

Can the minister tell me why he allowed this major loophole which has permitted \$73.5 million to be taken away from the Hydro workers? Why did his moratorium have this huge loophole in it?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member will know that under certain provisions of the federal tax act companies are obliged to take a contribution holiday once their surpluses reach a certain level. I do not imagine that the member is suggesting I overrule the Supreme Court.

PETITIONS

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr. Ward: I have a petition on behalf of Carol Orchard and 5,000 other people which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"We demand that the law be enforced and that drivers who are apprehended while impaired be subject to more severe penalties. On January 16, 1987, a local man was sentenced to two years less one day after pleading guilty to criminal negligence causing death, when the maximum penalty is life imprisonment with lifetime prohibition from driving.

"We demand that minimum sentences be introduced to the Criminal Code of Canada where only maximum penalties exist.

"We demand that the licence suspension should concurrently follow the incarceration period.

"We demand that rehabilitation should be a mandatory, enforced portion of the sentence.

"We petition the Ontario government to enforce the laws now in place in order to force drinking and driving to become socially unacceptable."

Mr. Speaker: I remind all members that the House has not recessed or adjourned. There are quite a number of private conversations. It is difficult to hear. Could all members pay attention?

HOMEMAKERS' RATE OF PAY

Mr. Gregory: I have a petition to the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. It is signed by 63 homemakers and reads as follows:

"We experienced Red Cross homemakers bring to your attention an important issue that is causing much friction. The Department of Employment and Immigration has initiated a program in co-operation with the Red Cross for training new homemakers in our community. Homemakers in this program are earning \$6 per hour. Our current rate of pay is from \$4.60 per hour starting to \$5.60 maximum per hour. These circumstances violate the spirit of equal pay for equal work.

"We understand from our supervisor that all attempts to improve funding at the provincial level have failed. We, as homemakers, request additional funding so that there can be a better rate of pay for homemakers, who are an important part of the home care team in Ontario. We are confident that you will intervene and resolve our issue."

So much for Liberal open government.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: Mr. Speaker, I bet you are wondering what today's total is. I wish to table a petition which reads:

"To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

This is signed by 80 persons.

Today's total is 1,556.

EDUCATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Reville: I have a petition in both English and Chinese. It is signed by 30 residents and says:

"Keep the multicultural promise. Bring forward Bill 80."

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

OPERATING ENGINEERS AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 47, An Act to amend the Operating Engineers Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Today I am reintroducing the Operating Engineers Amendment Act which will allow engineers certified by other Canadian provinces to apply for an Ontario certificate at their current levels of education and experience.

Under the present act, engineers certified elsewhere in Canada qualify only for an Ontario certificate at one grade below their existing class. In addition, the current requirement that engineers first apply for a one-year provisional certificate before being eligible for permanent certification will be abolished. These changes will make it easier for Ontario employers who must look outside the province to staff their plants with qualified engineers.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 48, An Act to amend the Travel Industry Act.

Motion agreed to.

1510

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am pleased to reintroduce today the Travel Industry Amendment Act. As you are aware from the last session, Mr. Speaker, the bill includes a number of amendments to ensure the best possible protection for the Ontario travelling public and to facilitate the ministry's dealing with failed or failing companies.

In addition to certain housekeeping changes and clarifications, the Travel Industry Amendment Act will allow the director of the consumer protection division to apply to court for direction on disposition of the frozen assets of the failing registrant and for an order to appoint a receiver and manager.

UPHOLSTERED AND STUFFED ARTICLES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 49, An Act to amend the Upholstered and Stuffed Articles Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I would like to reintroduce amendments today to the Upholstered and Stuffed Articles Act. In addition to a few minor housekeeping changes, as you may recall from the last session, Mr. Speaker, the amendments include a substantial increase in penalties that may be levied for contravention of the act's registration, labelling and other requirements.

THEATRES AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 50, An Act to amend the Theatres Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The proposed legislation I am reintroducing today will bring the management structure of the Ontario Film Review Board in line with other public agencies, boards and commissions.

Under this amendment to the Theatres Act, the chairman will be appointed by an order in council rather than being a civil servant. Administrative and support services will become the responsibility of the director of the theatres branch.

GOOD SAMARITAN ACT

Mr. Haggerty moved first reading of Bill 51, An Act to Relieve Persons from Liability in respect of Voluntary Emergency Medical and First Aid Services.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Haggerty: The purpose of the bill is to relieve persons from liability with respect to voluntary emergency first-aid assistance or medical services rendered at or near the scene of an accident or other sudden emergency.

This bill has been in the House for a number of years now and has been supported by all parties. As the provincial government moves in the direction of putting more responsibility upon local municipalities, it is time that the bill be put forward and carried.

Mr. Speaker: The member will have time, maybe, to debate that at some further time.

PUBLIC SERVICE SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. McLean moved first reading of Bill 53, An Act to amend the Public Service Superannuation Amendment Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. McLean: The purpose of the bill is to suspend the superannuation allowances while a person entitled thereto is receiving any salary, fee or compensation from the province of Ontario.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RETIREMENT ALLOWANCES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. McLean moved first reading of Bill 54, An Act to amend the Legislative Assembly Retirement Allowances Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. McLean: The purpose of the bill is to suspend retirement allowances while a person entitled thereto is receiving compensation for acting as a member of a board, commission or other body holding office at the nomination of the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

MOTION TO SET ASIDE ORDINARY BUSINESS

Mr. Swart moved that, pursuant to standing order 37, the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance; namely, the government's failure to take effective action to protect Ontario drivers from the rate-gouging of the private insurance industry, as evidenced by its increasingly incoherent and incomprehensible policy announcements, the increasing numbers of drivers receiving staggeringly high insurance renewal notices and the massive body of unjust industry practices, which are coming to light more and more each day.

Mr. Speaker: Notice of this motion was received in time—in fact, at 10:32 this morning—and it is in order. I will listen to the honourable member for up to five minutes, as well as to representatives of each other party, in order that they might make arguments for or against this motion.

Mr. Swart: We are moving for this special debate because of the injustices in our private insurance system. Instead of getting fewer, they are expanding. They are massive. They are hurting hundreds of thousands of people.

I have to say I was somewhat surprised to hear the Premier (Mr. Peterson) make some comments today deriding these special debates. If the Premier and his government do not realize the concern and the anger of the public out there about insurance rates, then they are out of touch with the public of this province.

I think that a call I received and checked out just yesterday says it all pretty well. This call was from Lauren Mitchell of 7 Romfield Circuit, Thornhill, Ontario. She had been accident-free for a decade, with no lost points until April 1985 when she had a small at-fault accident, doing approximately \$500 damage to her car and \$1,000 to the other car. One month later she was involved in an accident with an illegally parked bus. The bus driver was fined for being illegally parked. On August 7, 1985, she was rear-ended by another driver who was at fault. It was a serious accident and she was injured in that accident, but there was no blame attached to her.

In November 1984, before she was involved in these accidents, she paid \$624 for insurance. In November 1985 it went up to \$1,850, and then in November 1986 it went up to \$1,980. She changed to Royal Facility and got it for \$652 in January 1987 but, of course, coverage was reduced and there was no collision coverage.

In January 1987 her son, Wayne Fairless, who had lived in Manitoba for nine years, moved in with them. At 20 years of age, he was paying \$250 in Manitoba for his insurance.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I really do hate to interrupt the honourable member in full flow—

Mr. McClellan: Then do not do it.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Why not do it? Why set aside the rules of this august chamber to hear about Mrs. Betty Smith's insurance? All we are doing is deciding whether we should have a debate. If he wants to give us that palaver later, let him do so, but why does he not look at the rules and abide by them? What is his House leader doing here?

1520

Mr. Swart: I am surprised, Mr. Speaker, that you let him interrupt in that manner. They will have five minutes over there. I think it is perfectly appropriate for me to give the reasons and to give examples of the injustices that exist in this province today on the insurance issue.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: He is simply thumbing his nose at the rules of the House and somebody should stop him.

Mr. Speaker: I do not like anyone thumbing his nose and I tried to make it very clear at the beginning that members would have up to five minutes to express their views as to why we should or should not debate this particular motion.

The member for Welland-Thorold now has one minute and 22 seconds left.

Mr. Swart: I should have some time reinstated for the interruption. I think it is perfectly reasonable for me to point out the kind of horrendous injustices that exist in this province. This is one of the very serious ones that exist here and that the government has taken no action to correct.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: That is not true.

Mr. Swart: It certainly is true.

This takes place two and a half years after we have had the insurance crisis and almost two years since the present minister has been in power. He does not even pretend to have made a single change to protect the motorist since he has been in office. This takes place three weeks after the minister announced what he would like to call reform measures.

That is another reason we need this debate, because the minister's reform measures, as he announced them, are a con job on this Legislature and the people of this province.

Mr. Ashe: Are we to conclude that the government does not have a response? I thought the order went in that way.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, I bring to your attention the wording of rule 37(a). "Following the routine proceedings and before the orders of the day on an afternoon sitting, any member may move to set aside the ordinary business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance requiring immediate consideration."

I submit to you the motion is out of order on that basic premise, that we have been discussing this for many years. We have been discussing it more immediately for many weeks and the honourable member for Welland-Thorold has been discussing it at the top of his voice and using his undoubted histrionic capabilities for many days.

The ordinary business of the House today—

Mr. McClellan: The standing order does not require a determination as to whether the motion is in order. It requires a determination as to whether it is an emergency. The government House leader is, for whatever purpose, completely distorting the nature of the question that is being put before the House.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, if it is not an emergency, it is not in order. I submit to you, sir, that it certainly is not. It is a matter that is before the community. In many respects it is a response to initiatives taken by the honourable member who is even now waiting to go down to be a witness and participant in the standing committee dealing with other important matters, but his attendance, of course, is required here.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that under our rules, we should go ahead with the ordinary business of the day, which would permit the honourable member for Welland-Thorold, if he has not already spoken, to unload his views, which are extremely interesting—he is one of the best speakers in the House in his own way—and I would look forward to hearing them.

For us to set aside a third day for a so-called emergency debate does not make that much difference as the universe unfolds, but I will tell you it is an indication that this House is not abiding by the agreed rules. I would suggest to you, sir, that this debate should not proceed for those obvious and rational reasons.

Mr. Ashe: Mr. Speaker, I am glad we got it clarified that, in effect, the government House leader was really challenging your ruling. He did not so indicate, but you had already ruled, in my view, that this motion was in order. The only thing we had to decide was whether an emergency existed that would then prompt the debate to continue.

I rise to indicate support for the motion put forth by the member for Welland-Thorold today. There is no doubt that this issue is important. In our view, it is urgent. I think one of the reasons it has been made urgent is that it seems very evident that the government, through the minister and others, is setting policy that changes from day to day. I think because this is an urgent issue that affects so many people in Ontario—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ashe: I think we had better throw them a fish, Mr. Speaker, especially the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio). Does he want a live one or a dead one?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Give us a motion on that.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I think maybe we had better subdue our language.

Mr. Ashe: Because of the urgency of this issue which affects so many people of this province, we have to put where we stand very clearly on the record. This can be done and should be done today. It is going to be very nice

to hear, clearly and succinctly, what the government really means in this policy, and I think that is what makes the issue important.

We will, at the appropriate time, be making the position of this party, which does not necessarily agree with the mover of the motion, very clear. I think where the issue is of importance right now is that the drivers, the consumers, the taxpayers of Ontario deserve to know where the three parties in this Legislature sit, and which of—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ashe: Rather than starting all over again, I will wind up. I do think it is of urgent public importance for us to hear clearly and possibly distinctly, if that is at all possible, what the government's position is today, not what it was yesterday or the day before.

Mr. Harris: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would like to bring to your attention standing order 37. The government House leader has, in effect, as my colleague the member for Durham West indicated, challenged the ruling of the Speaker. The standing order reads: “(b) The Speaker shall then rule whether or not the motion is in order based on the following criteria,” and it goes through paragraphs i, ii, iii, iv, v and vi. I am not going to read them all, but, Mr. Speaker, you ruled that it was in order and therefore you ruled, sir, and we respect your ruling, that it was indeed an emergency, that it was indeed in order based on those criteria.

Mr. Polsinelli: He did not rule that it was an emergency; he ruled that it was in order.

Mr. Harris: That is exactly what he ruled, if the member will read—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member for Nipissing on this important point of order.

Mr. Harris: To clarify it then, I will read them.

“(b) The Speaker shall then rule whether or not the motion is in order based on the following criteria:

“(i) the member proposing the motion shall give written notice...” That was done.

“(ii) not more than one such motion...” That is in order for that reason.

“(iii) not more than one matter may be discussed...” It is in order for that reason.

“(iv) the motion must not revive discussion...” It is in order for that reason.

“(v) the motion must not raise a question of privilege...” It is in order for that reason.

"(vi) the discussion under the motion must not raise any question that, according to the standing orders of the House, can only be debated on a distinct motion under notice."

Standing order 37(a) says, "Following the routine proceedings...any member may move to set aside the ordinary business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance."

The Speaker rules whether it is of urgent public importance and whether it is in order. He ruled, we accepted that ruling and the only drivel we heard from the government House leader was, "I disagree with the Speaker." That is totally out of order and should not be allowed in debate in this House. I bring it up because he interrupted the speech of my colleague and very good friend the member for Welland-Thorold.

Now the question before us—it is an emergency, it is in order—is, shall we proceed?

1530

Mr. Speaker: Order. I hope all members have read standing order 37 very carefully.

Mr. Ferraro: Every night.

Mr. Speaker: Then they will be very much aware that 37(a) says that any member may place a motion before this House and that member has to decide, himself or herself, whether it is a matter of urgent public importance. Then it goes on, under (b), to say how the Speaker will decide whether it is in order on the criteria set out.

Three members have now had an opportunity to discuss this matter and to try to dissuade or persuade members to vote on the motion, which I will now put, according to standing order 37(d).

Shall the debate proceed?

All those in favour will say "aye."

All those opposed will say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Rae: I rise to take part in this debate. The government may not regard as a matter of urgent importance the fact that there are tens of thousands of people who are getting rate increases of 20 per cent, 30 per cent, 40 per cent and 50 per cent day after day in this province, but we happen to think it is a matter—

Interjection.

Mr. Rae: The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) said it is a yawn. Let that be the epitaph of the Liberal Party of this province when it comes to car insurance. They regard it as a yawn, they regard

it as a bore, they would rather not deal with it, and it is not a matter of urgent importance.

I find it ironic that late on a Thursday afternoon, prior to the calling back of the House, it was an issue of sufficient importance that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter), the best friend the insurance industry has ever had in government in Ontario, held a press conference to announce the urgent action he was taking. When all the dust had cleared, all the smoke had dissipated and all the fluff and flurry of the minister's rhetoric was suddenly open to examination, we saw precisely what urgent action the Liberal Party had taken.

The next day, the headlines stated that the Liberal Party was going to freeze insurance rates. They did no such thing. They said they were going to put a cap on premium rates. They did no such thing. They said there was going to be a rollback. There has been no such thing. The things that the minister said he was going to do have not been done. The drivers of this province continue to be gouged, taken advantage of and jerked around by insurance companies after April 23, just the way they were before April 23, and the situation is just as urgent today as it was when the minister made his phoney announcement a few weeks ago.

I cannot imagine an issue that has so angered and annoyed the driving public. They are faced with rate increases which have no logic, rhyme or reason to them, which have no relationship to their driving experience, which have no relationship to their overall experience as drivers over the last 20 and 30 years, and which simply reflect an industry that has taken advantage of the fact that we have a compulsory insurance system in the province which has an exclusive private-profit monopoly as the way to deliver it.

I have been listening carefully over the last number of weeks and months to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and to the Premier (Mr. Peterson). My mind went back to the great debate which took place in this province 20 years ago on the subject of health insurance. At that time we had a Premier from London, John P. Robarts. I understand Mr. Peterson likes to think of himself as being a successor to John Robarts. He described medicare as a machiavellian scheme foisted on the people of this province.

Do members know what final compromise Robarts wanted with respect to health insurance? Coming from London, one can perhaps understand it. The Robarts compromise on health insurance was, "Okay, we will accept compulso-

ry insurance." The political drive coming out of Saskatchewan and then adopted by a minority government in Ottawa was sufficiently strong that the Tories finally realized they could not withstand the logic and the public demand for quality health care, at rates people could afford, that would be publicly accessible and publicly controlled. But the Robarts compromise, which was ultimately withdrawn because they could not make it work and they could not sell it, was, "We will have compulsory insurance, but we will give a monopoly on the delivery of that compulsory insurance to the private sector companies" that were providing it at that time.

Twenty years have passed. We now have a Premier from London. He considers himself to be the successor to John P. Robarts. What is the David Peterson-John P. Robarts look-alike-contest award for insurance for cars in Ontario? It is compulsory insurance, but it is compulsory insurance delivered by the private sector monopoly which continues to operate in this province.

Insurance will be a kind of cash cow. When one gives that cash cow the stability which the minister talked about on the radio the other morning—the stability which he talks about, the stability for the insurance industry—then we have a cash cow which will be underwritten in perpetuity by a government-appointed board, which will guarantee the insurance companies a return on profit in this province and will guarantee, not that rates will go down but that rates will go up under the Monte Kwinter-John P. Robarts-David Peterson scheme in Ontario, and that is what is wrong with it.

We have been speaking in this House of two things. We have been speaking about a rate structure that is too high. It is increasingly unaffordable for a great many drivers. Some people are spending more for their insurance than their cars are worth, even when they do not have any collision. I know a lot of drivers who have no collision insurance at all on their own car and who are still paying more for their insurance for personal liability and for third-party liability than their car is actually worth. That is the first problem.

The second problem is a rate structure and an industry that, frankly, sees the system as a cash cow and that sees the way it operates not as a system of justice or a system of service but as a system of punishment.

There is one simple, rational, intelligent solution to this question. We all agree there should be compulsory insurance. If there is compulsory insurance, why do we not deliver it

ourselves? Why do we not take care of it ourselves? Why not have the kind of co-operative, efficient, fair public service they have in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia?

I find it fascinating. The minister found the time to go to Zurich, he found the time to go to France, he found the time to go to London during the break; he travelled the world. There were only three places in the entire globe that he did not visit to study insurance during the break that we had. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia were the only three places in the world he did not deem it worthy to draw from the experience of.

I think the issue is very clear. I think the issue is extremely clear. We have a government that is not interested in protecting the consumer. To borrow a phrase of my friend the member for Welland-Thorold (Mr. Swart), who has been such an outstanding crusader on behalf of the people of this province, and he said it himself so clearly and so categorically and it is so true, the Liberal Party, in its most cynical moment—and let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, when the Liberal Party gets cynical, we are talking real cynical—said, "We can not solve the problem of the consumer; we can solve a political problem."

The political problem the Liberal Party has is that this issue is not going to go away and the public is not going to be satisfied with phoney solutions. The public is not going to be put off by solutions that only end up increasing their rates and increasing the profits of the insurance companies at the same time.

1540

The people can see through that kind of phoney solution and they can see that, in fact, there is a rational way to go and it is the way the minister has not been able to convince cabinet to move towards. That system is, if I can be simple about it, a driver-owned public plan, paid for by premiums, which ensures that premiums stay in the province, that they are used not to pay off shareholders, not to pay ridiculous salaries to insurance company executives, but that they are used for the benefit of drivers in this province and for nobody else.

Mr. Callahan: Put all those people out of work.

Mr. Rae: I hear the Liberals heckling me and I am delighted. If the member for Brampton wants to have a campaign on this question of car insurance, I will take him on in Brampton, I will take the Liberals on in the good riding of St. Catharines and anywhere in this province on the

question of car insurance, because they know perfectly well the drivers of this province are fighting mad and are not going to put up with a second-rate system any more. They want a first-rate system, an efficient system and not the kind of faldral they have been getting from the Liberal Party up until now.

Mr. Ashe: It is very interesting to note that the government does not have anything to say on this issue. I hope, before the debate ends this afternoon, we will try to clarify something. That is one of the reasons I spoke on behalf of my party to suggest this was an emergency. There is no doubt at all this has been an ongoing issue that has caused great consternation and concern to the people of Ontario, the taxpayers of Ontario and the consumers of Ontario.

Therein lies the difference between the position of this party and the third party. We agree the perception of the insurance industry has not been the best. Nobody can deny that. We can have differences of opinion as to why. I think they have not done a good public relations job over the years, to say the least. There is no doubt that the member for Welland-Thorold gets on his soap-box from time to time, but there is a problem there. I feel and my party feels this problem can be addressed with reasonable and rational government legislation, while keeping the system run by the private sector.

I know the socialists to the left think everything and anything is run better by the government. I do not agree with that. I do not agree with some of the fudged numbers they bring forth from the three western provinces. I do not agree, based on letters and correspondence I have had from people in those provinces that suggest it is not all they paint it out to be. I have had people who work in the system in those provinces write to me. I have had people who have experience dealing with the system in those provinces who have written to us. It is not quite all roses, as they would paint it.

They also do not really point out the direct and, more important, the indirect contribution by the taxpayers in some of those provinces to get the system going and then to keep it afloat from time to time.

The problem with auto insurance, particularly in Ontario, is that we have a significant population, with the bulk of automobiles, based in a relatively small geographic area. Unfortunately, they have been involved in more accidents, on average, than in less populated areas of this country. Therein lies the problem. There have been too many claims, too many court

actions, too much involvement by counsel in arguing these things. In fact, the insurance companies over the last number of years, rightly or wrongly, have been paying out more than they take in.

I do not know how the third party picks out of the air these great indications of gross profits that have been made, ripping off, etc. Frankly, I do not fully agree with the underwriting policies that have been adhered to in the last number of years, and in my view and my party's view this is where the government quite rightly has a role. Obviously, the insurance industry is now taking notice of the issue and is prepared to put its house in order in that regard to make it appear to be fairer than it has been, and therein is the issue.

This party supports the establishment of a rate review tribunal. I would like to put it in the same context as the Ontario Energy Board, which has the opportunity on an annual basis, and more often if it sees fit—and I think that is very important—to bring forward the gas companies to justify rate changes. If at any time the energy board feels, "Hey, we are not too happy about what is going on out there with the XYZ Co. and we want them to come in and answer some questions for us," it has that opportunity.

I think this would be appropriate for the industry. It would be able to publicly, if you will, wash out its linen, show where it is having the problems and have to justify in the minds of that agency, and then ultimately to the public through the media coverage of its deliberations, the rates it is proposing to charge. In that sense, we agree.

There is no doubt where we have been going in the ongoing look at no-fault insurance, modified no-fault insurance and the tort approach. There is a role to try to cut down on the amount of time and expense that is maintained over claims and litigation, particularly on some claims that we would classify as being small. Again, we support that reform.

We do not support taking away completely the right of somebody who is seriously injured or, in fact, killed in a traffic accident to further recourse through the legal system. We do not agree that one just goes to the system again. Members in this Legislature have not been too happy with the so-called meat chart approach of the Workers' Compensation Board and we would not support going completely to that idea.

We also support the concept of a form of Ombudsman who would be there to protect the consumer and be the go-between when a consumer feels he has been dealt with unjustly.

I suppose it is really there that we depart from both of the other two parties. The new philosophy and direction that should be given to the industry, if it is not prepared to accept it, is that it should be going about its underwriting practices on the basis of a common law philosophy; that is to say, a person is innocent until he is shown to be guilty.

In car underwriting philosophy, that says that if you happen to be 22 and have not had any accidents, traffic violations of any significance or lost points, you are still innocent, even though actuarially and statistically you are in a group that has been shown to be more costly than others in the way of claims, etc. That is one area that goes along the common law principle that you are innocent until you are shown to be otherwise.

With that kind of carrot to drivers out there, particularly to the young drivers, this would be a strong incentive to maintain that record, which undoubtedly would help us on the road as well.

Of course, we have to make sure that insurance is available at all times. It is funny, but I have heard that in one or two of the socialist provinces that had a strike, people who had claims and things to be done over a period of several months could not deal with anybody. Is that great service? I suppose it is one way to postpone liability of claims, but I am not quite sure it is the answer.

If we now have problems with the government, they have been the ridiculous statement by the minister, since changed a few times—I hope he will take the opportunity today to clarify the government position—this ridiculous pronouncement, I believe it was on April 23, to talk about a freeze on that particular day and a 10 per cent rollback in certain categories. That is not good enough. That was a knee-jerk political reaction to the issue of the day. That is not good enough for the people of Ontario.

1550

We do not subscribe at all to cross-subsidization in the context of the taxpayer being involved in the system by government-run insurance, but we also do not agree that is the answer. If the insurance companies are not taking in sufficient revenue to pay the claims satisfactorily, how are they going to do it under that kind of system? We would suggest that a 10 per cent rollback for a young person is nothing, but if the underwriting principle of innocent before one is accused of being guilty is the way possibly to cut rates in half, by two thirds or by one third, that is the logical approach.

One attacks where the problem is. The car repair suggestions of the minister are a good area, and I applaud him for those, but let us get at some of these issues. Let us get at them now. The government should bring in the legislation. Let us make it work. Let us make it work on behalf of the drivers of Ontario and, most important, the consumers of Ontario and the taxpayers of Ontario, because I do not in any way subscribe to the fact that if government does it, it will do it better and do it cheaper. That is not what the record shows, and the reference to health insurance, in my view, is an excellent example of that.

Yes, we have a good service, but we are sure paying for it, both as taxpayers and as consumers.

Mr. Hayes: I appreciate the opportunity to speak on this very important issue of auto insurance. Even though I said I appreciate the opportunity, this debate would not be necessary if the Minister of Financial Institutions and his party were half as concerned about the welfare of the drivers in Ontario as they are about the financial interest of the private insurance companies.

As my colleague the member for Welland-Thorold has stated, the government has failed to take effective action to protect Ontario drivers from the rate gouging of the private insurance industry.

It is most important that we debate this issue today because there are too many people driving on the roads in Ontario without insurance because they cannot afford it. There are people who have lost their jobs because the insurance costs more than what their vehicles cost. They have had to park those cars because they could not afford to drive them.

All members of the household are penalized because one person has an accident or a speeding ticket. Small business people have laid workers off because they have not been able to afford the insurance. The list goes on and on, and the Minister of Financial Institutions continues to be the spokesperson for the insurance industry. He also continues to refuse even to consider public auto plans like they have in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

I want to relate a couple of cases I have in my own riding, some of my own constituents. Let us take a look at Joe Lester. He is a taxicab driver in the town of Essex. He has been driving for 26 years. He has been in the cab business for 26 years. He has not had one claim in all that time. In 1983 he paid around \$900 a year for his

insurance. In 1986 his insurance increased by approximately \$1,500 and again in 1987 by another \$2,000. He is now paying \$5,200 for insurance for one taxicab and, I repeat, there were no claims in 26 years. I asked Joe, "How can you keep in business?" He said, "I am losing money, but this is my community, and at my age there are no other jobs I can go to." That individual is losing money, and if something does not happen very soon, that small town of Essex will be without the services of a taxi.

I would like to read a couple of letters from my constituents. One says:

"Dear Pat,

"I would like to say that five members of my family voted for you after many years of voting for Liberals. We felt that it was time for a big change in our government. I would like to tell you what happened to me in the insurance industry.

"I moved from Woodslee to Windsor. When I reported my change of address to Windsor, the insurance company charged me \$60 more"—that does not sound like very much, but—"because of the new area. They said Windsor is a dangerous area for accidents. They did not take into account the fact that I am now driving 200 miles a week less. I never had an accident or a claim in my life. It is nothing but a big ripoff.

"A. Nikita."

Another one reads:

"Dear Mr. Hayes,

"I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks in the pursuit of an Ontario provincial auto insurance that you and the New Democratic Party are pursuing. My own insurance has increased a little more than \$100, and neither my wife nor I have had so much as a parking ticket.

"When the insurance corporations do well, they invest their millions in office complexes, shopping centres, apartment buildings and hotels—their profits, their empires. When the industry has a difficult year, they complacently and simply say that for a mere 50-cent increase per day, they can easily return to profitability. Where are the rebates for the policyholders during a good year? There are none. The funds are given in shares or dividends to the shareholders.

"The industry is running full-page ads, no less. There are lots of funds to run ads in every medium but no attempt to help keep the increases lower. The only reason the insurance industry is showing some concern is because a \$2-billion prize is at stake, something they took for granted, something that is going to slip through their

fingers. As I said in my opening sentence, please keep the pressure on. Keep up the good work.

"Sincerely yours,

"Vic Rotondi."

There are many letters here. Here is one from Maidstone:

"Dear Mr. Hayes,

"I agree with you. The insurance is too costly. My son, who is 18, was involved in an accident in Essex, but his car was not involved. He was going to make a left-hand turn, saw the car and knew he could not make the turn. So he stopped. The other car was coming too fast, lost control and hit a tree.

"My son's car insurance went from \$1,400 to \$3,500. He was not charged at the accident for anything. We cannot find out why it went up this high. They"—probably meaning the insurance company—"will not give us any information.

"For this reason, I am very displeased with the auto insurance in our province.

"Mrs. Avis Weston."

This government continually puts down the public auto insurance plans in the western provinces, but I got a call from a friend just today. Rick Byrne, who lived in Ontario, moved to Saskatchewan about a year and a half or two years ago. His wife, Doris, who had a medium-sized, four-cylinder car, was paying \$680 for insurance in Ontario. They moved to Saskatchewan, and she is now paying \$300 a year for insurance, and that includes the insurance and the licence for the car.

Rick's insurance—maybe the members will be interested in this one—in Ontario was \$1,600. He moved to Saskatchewan and his insurance and his licence total \$508. That is quite a bit of difference.

1600

Mr. Callahan: Is that a leased vehicle?

Mr. Hayes: If it was leased there it is probably still leased here, so it really does not matter.

The fact of the matter is that the insurance industry in this province is ripping off the drivers, and the Minister of Financial Institutions certainly supports it.

The point is it is proven that those provinces are more concerned about the drivers and the public out there. They are just as concerned about them as they are about the insurance industry and they protect their workers from insurance companies gouging them and cancelling their insurance for no reason.

If the Minister of Financial Institutions really wants to do something for the people of Ontario, he should support this one great idea of the New

Democratic Party and put in driver-owned public auto insurance. If he really wants to do something, that is what he can do.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: As members know, on April 23 I announced several government initiatives intended to bring fundamental fairness to the automobile insurance system for consumers. The April 23 initiatives are just part of our overall approach to this issue. On that date, I ordered that the rates for all automobile insurance categories be capped. It is important that members understand that when we talk about "capped," we talk about the levels in force on that date.

The current caps are to remain in effect until an independent rate review board reviews classification of rates and orders appropriate adjustments. The cap provides that the rate related to a specific class or factor used to set premiums by individual insurance companies cannot increase beyond its level at April 23. It is not a freeze; it is a cap. All auto insurance companies were immediately required to file rate information on April 23 in order to ensure compliance.

The cap prevents an increase in anticipation of rate control and stops any increases that would have been made after April 23. It applies to all components of automobile insurance, liability insurance, collision and comprehensive insurance, accident benefits, special perils and policy endorsements. Consumers facing renewals during the next few months may experience an increase in their premiums, but the highest possible rate they will have to pay will be that which was in place for their classification on April 23.

On that date, I also ordered a 10 per cent rate reduction for two groups which experience particularly serious rate increases. These include male drivers under age 25 and taxicabs insured through the Facility Association. Those young male drivers facing renewals may experience an increase resulting from their previous year's driving experience, but the highest possible rate they will have to pay will be the capped amount in place on April 23 minus 10 per cent. For those taxis not in the Facility Association, insurance companies will be prohibited from charging more than Facility Association rates.

The reduced rates are to remain in effect until reviewed by the rate review board, and when a policyholder is entitled to a reduction, the insurer will be required to offer the option of a cash rebate.

In respect to the motion now being debated, I would point out to the members that the initiatives announced on April 23 already ensure

that no increase in auto insurance premiums subsequent to April 23 will be permitted to occur without full determination and approval. What is more, rates for some groups will be reduced by 10 per cent.

During the current session of the Legislature, I will be introducing legislation to control all automobile insurance premiums in Ontario through an independent rate review board with powers to approve, adjust or roll back rates and to order rebates to policyholders. We intend to establish a permanent independent rate review board which will be led by a full-time chairperson and a panel of part-time members. The board will be supported by a secretariat which will maintain public information on rates and administer the public hearing process.

There have been many questions on how the board works and what facts it will be considering. Members of the rate review board will be appointed by order in council following consultation with groups such as automobile associations, consumer groups, insurance companies, insurance agents, brokers and adjusters, professional organizations, commercial consumers of insurance and municipal transit authorities. The mandate of the board will be to set rate ranges for all types of motor vehicle insurance, to review rates that were capped or reduced on April 23 and to hold public hearings on insurance rates, inviting representations by all concerned parties.

Once the board carries out its initial review of rates, it will conduct subsequent reviews on a periodic basis and on its own initiative or on the request of government. In making its rulings, the board will take into account public policy guidelines issued by the government. Consumer groups, individuals and the government will be able to appear and make representations during public hearings conducted by the board.

We are also moving to establish a consumer insurance bureau, headed by an insurance advocate who will provide information and assist consumers. Legislation will be introduced to ensure that the advocate has the power to investigate and publish complaint records of companies. In addition to the current power to initiate proceedings against insurance companies, we will introduce legislation to provide for enhanced penalties and administrative actions.

Further legislation will be introduced to address specific consumer protection issues, which include the following: requiring insurers to provide 45 days' written notice of intention not to renew an automobile insurance contract or to adjust the premium at the end of the term;

requiring insurers to offer the insured the option of buying a policy which would exclude named drivers within a household, which addresses the situation in which good drivers are penalized because they have a high-risk driver in their home; prohibiting insurers from charging a higher premium solely on the grounds that the individual who is a qualified driver was not continuously a named insured during his or her driving career; and requiring insurers to disclose the insured's rate classification, the specific premium rate and a breakdown of the premium.

We are also dealing with the issue of rate classification in order to prohibit age, sex, marital status and other objectionable criteria being used as rating categories for automobile insurance in Ontario. The government will in future provide a rating classification system with greater equity. Once again, I would point out that this previously announced initiative also directly addresses the motion before the House. We intend to provide a uniform, understandable and risk-related classification system. Classes will be based on such risk-related factors as number of kilometres driven per year, use and type of vehicle and personal driving record. The rate review board will set related rate ranges for these classes, and insurance companies will be required to use the prescribed classes.

I have no reason to believe the insurance industry would take actions to attempt to avoid the automobile rate review legislation. Nevertheless, concern has been expressed that rate review on auto premiums will lead to artificial inflation of premiums for other insurance coverage. In response to these concerns, I have stated before, and I state again, we intend to make sure there is no cross-subsidization between automobile insurance lines and other lines of personal insurance.

The rate review board will have the power to investigate fully all aspects of the automobile insurance business, including overhead expenses, investment income and any other information relevant to the setting of automobile insurance rates. Premiums that are fair and equitable will incorporate reasonable expenses for providing that coverage. The rate review board will be examining these expense levels, and in so doing will be ensuring that no expenditures unrelated to the provision of auto insurance are approved.

The initiatives I announced on April 23 are designed to ensure that the auto insurance premiums are fair, equitable, based on actuarially sound figures and subject to a review process that is open and public. We believe these

measures will bring long-term stability to the auto insurance market and deliver a system of fair and reasonable insurance premiums to the consumer. I would remind the members that these initiatives are one part of a total approach to consumer protection.

We are also looking at no-fault insurance through the inquiry headed by Mr. Justice Coulter Osborne, which will report by November 1. The Ontario Law Reform Commission is also examining several issues, and as I announced on April 23, we will be introducing a consumer protection law in the automobile repair industry.

My announcements on April 23 were several in a long series of reforms which the government has announced and will continue to work towards. It is this government's intention to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that consumers receive fair and equitable insurance coverage at a fair and reasonable price.

1610

Mr. Grossman: I rise to participate in this emergency debate and begin by pointing out what the real emergency is. The emergency is not simply the issue which, to be candid, the New Democratic Party has been working hard to put on the front pages over the last little while; rather, it is the total chaos which has been created in the insurance industry by this government on and since April 23, 1987.

The confusion now ranges throughout the industry. At first, we thought it was confined to the auto insurance industry, which was neither consulted nor understood the steps taken suddenly, out of the blue, on April 23, 1987, by the minister. But now, pursuant to the questions we raised last week in the House, the industry found out with us, as policy was made on the go by the minister, that somehow the rate review board now is going to have some authority—the minister really does not know how much authority—over all insurance companies of all natures—general, household, fire and liability—throughout the province. Talk about chaos.

After April 23, one would have thought that when the House resumed short days later to deal with an announcement which obviously the minister thought could not wait another five or six days, we would have seen the legislation tabled. But no, we have not seen the legislation tabled.

Chaos in the industry? We wondered whether the rate review board would allow profits to be passed through, thus ending up in a circumstance where not only would we have rate increases but

also the only new thing added to it, government-approved rate increases.

We asked the minister whether he was going to be in a position to dictate how much profit would be allowed the insurance companies; and in the Legislature, on the record, he said no, that was up to the rate review board. That did not ring right to me, so I went back and looked at what the minister said at his press conference. It turned out I was correct; I did remember the minister saying he was going to exercise that control, and I will read it into the record.

Question from the media: "Are you essentially going to determine what type of profits insurance companies will make?" The minister's answer: "Yes, that is correct." Question: "Well, how much profit?" The minister then changed his mind. He said: "Let me tell you about a system they have in Switzerland. They have built in a maximum cap on profit at three per cent. We have not set any kind of rate and that is something the rate review board will have to do. But what happens is this, there is nothing to say that—" He is interrupted by a question: "You will determine how much profit insurance companies can make, essentially?" Answer: "Yes."

That was on April 23. The minister was going to determine what profit margins were allowed to the industry. When we got into the House short days later, the minister was running scared from that hastily devised policy and said it would be up to the rate review board to determine what the rate of return was.

We asked him yesterday whether he would have the power to overrule the board. Yesterday he did; this morning he did not.

We asked him what is going to happen to the rate increases if he allows them to break even and thus make a profit, which would indicate an increase of 4.4 per cent to 7.5 per cent. The minister then began to become vague, but the bottom line on all of that is we are going to see those rate increases. There is no cap. The rates are not frozen as of April 23. The rates are going to go up.

The emergency we are dealing with this afternoon is that the industry has been moved from the problems outlined effectively, I will say, by the New Democratic Party—I do not deny that for a second—to a situation where we have total chaos: no rules, no regulations; an industry which, in the chaos and vacuum that now have been created, is likely to respond in some very predictable ways.

This afternoon the minister was at pains to point out there is nothing to prohibit the

insurance companies from moving people from one rating category to the other. Chaos. That was not happening on a large scale before April 23, but why will they not begin to do it today?

We all saw what happened in this House when the first words were spoken of rent controls in 1975. As soon as the spectre was created, all of a sudden, all the rents were moved up to create a big base from which the landlords would operate after rent controls came in. We now have an equivalent situation. The minister cannot control what is possible to be a switching of people into new categories because they are temporarily capped.

Mr. Swart: Or refusing to insure.

Mr. Grossman: That is exactly the next point. The next point was raised quietly to me in the House this afternoon by my colleague the member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt). He pointed out to me that he has now been contacted by people who have had their insurance cancelled or not renewed by an insurance company because the company wanted to raise the rate, could not temporarily, and simply chose to leave that previously insured driver uninsured, thanks to the April 23 instant-dinner solution of the Minister of Financial Institutions.

What we have here is an industry in total chaos. We have consumers out there, some of whom think they are going to get a deal but none of whom has any real protection today. We have the insurance companies that are still free to move rates around but this time moving people around to the rates instead of the rates around to the people. We have the government totally confused as to whether it has any control over the circumstance. The minister is at great pains to point out that he does not have control over the circumstance. He says he will not determine the profit margin and he will not overrule the rate review board.

What have we ended up with? A long-term freeze or cap? No, we have not. We do not have the purity of a simple, consistent and, in my view, silly government-run scheme; I would totally oppose that, but at least we would know whom to look to. We do not have the values inherent in a classic private enterprise system with an appropriate amount of government supervision. We now have a Kwinter hybrid.

To make it all the more foolish, the minister now says this afternoon that the rate review board is going to consider the no-fault insurance option. I thought Coulter Osborne was doing that and that he was going to report this fall. Is the minister trying to tell us the legislation that I

thought was going to be dealt with in this House this spring, and which we would all be happy to see in this House this spring, is not going to be here this spring? Is he trying to tell us it will not be here next spring? Is he trying to tell us that it was simply an announcement made on April 23 to give the impression of action in the industry when in fact it has done nothing of the sort?

Simply, we should not be confused or surprised at the chaos that now prevails. Let me quote the minister. On January 26, he said, "I would suggest that when it comes to the industry, it is a free market." He went on to say on April 26, suddenly, "What we are questioning is the arbitrariness of how they are setting some of their insurance rate premiums."

On January 26, he said, "When it comes to underwriting profit, the insurance companies still pay out more in claims than they take in as premiums." On April 23, he said, "While overall profitability increases"—remember, in January he thought they were losing money—"some consumers continue to pay unjustifiably higher premium rates with no recourse."

He said on April 2: "I believe, personally, that government cannot run anything better than the private sector. My reading of the Ontario population is that there is not much support for government-run insurance." At the press conference, the minister was at great pains to say he had kept totally open the government-run auto insurance option for his government. We can only conclude that the message he is sending out by saying that is that if it becomes politically attractive to make a sudden, quick hit to implement government-run automobile insurance in this province, he will adopt that.

It harkens back to the difference between the Liberals and the New Democrats on extra billing. I applaud my colleagues to the left. They believed in a ban on extra billing, philosophically and emotionally. They fundamentally believed it was important to ban extra billing. I disagree with them, but they approached it from that philosophical standpoint.

The Liberals, short years ago, agreed totally with extra billing. During the extra billing debate, the Premier himself talked about having people pay direct for extra health care. They had no philosophical or policy commitment to it; they had a political commitment to it. We are seeing exactly the same thing on auto insurance. It is not a government concerned about auto rates, about gouging or about the rating system. It is not a government concerned at all about equity or apportionment of risk.

The New Democrats approach it at least from a philosophical position which I disagree with but which is consistent with their policy; it is an approach, a single approach, to solving a problem. I do not think it will work. But across the way, as on extra billing and so many issues, the Liberal government addresses this issue from a political standpoint only because it is a short-term political problem, with no philosophical approach, no policy direction and, in this case, not even legislation or a policy—simply political cosmetics. The emergency we face today is chaos caused by the Minister of Financial Institutions.

1620

Mr. Swart: I knew there would be some difference of opinion in the debate here. What I did not expect was the attempt by the Liberals to frustrate this debate and even to frustrate my remarks when I introduced the motion. I know they do not want to discuss this issue. They have made it clear. They are tremendously indifferent; they are even passing up their turns today to debate it. That is their indifference to this issue. They know the trouble their party is in and they know they cannot defend their minister. That is what is in fact taking place on that side of the House.

They have the right to believe that, because—let us make no mistake about it—it is the government of this day and the insurance companies that are directly responsible for the injustices and the horrendous rates now being perpetrated against the people of this province. Nobody else is running the store. The Liberal government and the insurance companies have had absolute and total power to do what they like over the last two years. The problems that we have are directly accountable to them.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) has pointed up, rightly so, the ineffectiveness and the convoluted and changing policies of the government on this issue. Nobody who has observed this House in the last three weeks could come to any other conclusion.

It is even worse than that. I do not like to say this when the minister is not in the House, but it not only is a crash program with nothing being thought out; there is also no sincerity on the minister's part and on the part of the government in wanting to do anything about this crisis.

What the minister is proposing is all down the road. He says he is going to bring in legislation that is going to be effective. When is that legislation going to come in? When it does come in, how long is it going to be debated? When is it

going to be proclaimed? When is the rate board going to come in? Nothing is taking place now to resolve the problems of this province.

If he and the government had been sincere, they would have proclaimed subsection 317(1) of the Insurance Act, which is already in the act, and they could have proclaimed it on an hour's notice or on a day's notice. Let me read that section, which has never been proclaimed in 50 years:

"It is the duty of the superintendent, after due notice and a hearing before him, to order an adjustment of the rates for automobile insurance whenever it is found by him that any such rates are excessive, inadequate, unfairly discriminatory or otherwise unreasonable."

He had the tool to use to take immediate action. He deliberately used another tool that will bring about no resolution of the problems before the next provincial election takes place. I say in this House, and I am saying it across this province, if you give those Liberals a majority in the next provincial election, nothing will happen at any time. This statement of the minister's on April 23 is nothing but a political manoeuvre to get them past the next provincial election. That is all it is.

If it was anything else, they would have proclaimed section 371 of the Insurance Act. By doing so, they could have taken action immediately to eliminate the discrimination against the under-25 males and against two or three people in a house who are being penalized because of one driver's record. No, the minister and the Liberal government do not want to take action. What they have effectively done is they have postponed their decision until after the election.

The crisis we have is really quite horrendous. The House leader of the Liberal Party deliberately tried to prevent me from finishing an example I wanted to give of these horrendous injustices, Lauren Mitchell of 7 Romfield Circuit in Thornhill, who called me just yesterday to tell me all about this.

She had not had an accident for decades; a perfect driving record. In April 1985 she had a small at-fault accident doing approximately \$500 damage to her car and \$1,000 damage to the other car. As I stated before, one month later she was involved in an accident with an illegally parked bus. The bus driver was fined. On August 7, 1985, she was rear-ended by another driver, who was at fault—a serious accident; she was rather seriously injured.

She had only one accident where she was at fault, and it was a very small accident. While she

paid \$624 in November 1984 for insurance, in November 1985 it went up to \$1,850, almost three times as much, to \$1,980 in 1986. She changed her insurance company to get a reduction, but she had a reduction in coverage as well and paid \$1,652.

Then in January 1987 her son, Wayne Fairliss, who had lived in Manitoba for nine years, moved in with her and her husband. At 20 years of age, he was paying \$250 for his insurance in Virden, Manitoba. Before coming to Ontario, he had a perfect four-year driving record. When he came here, he had to pay \$3,000 for his insurance for the same car—from \$250 to \$3,000.

One day he drove his mother's car and was involved in an accident, just last Friday, in fact, on May 8. There was considerable damage to the cars, but now he is going to have to pay—he has already been informed—\$4,500 when his premium comes due; but the mother's insurance goes up from \$1,600 to \$3,600.

It so happened that the father in that family had a car of his own which he had not been driving. They had just been using one car. He thought he would put his car on the road and go out and get insurance. He searched all over. The lowest premium he could get was \$3,000 because his wife had had these accidents and she has to turn in her driver's licence if he is going to get insurance at anything less than that.

The son is going back to Manitoba, he is so fed up with the insurance system in this province.

That is an example. There are hundreds of thousands just like that in this province, and we have a minister now who is standing up to say, "Well, we will take action some time down the road."

The crisis we have here has not happened in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. Even the president of the Insurance Bureau of Canada said he cannot argue with these rates we have developed through our research department. The average rate paid last year in Ontario was \$605, in British Columbia \$395, in Manitoba \$324 and in Saskatchewan \$228. None of the injustices that exist here are prevalent in those three provinces.

The member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe) says, as the insurance companies are all saying, of course, they do not have the density of cars out there. Does he know the proportion of accidents in those western provinces is substantially higher than it is here? He is listening too much to the insurance companies' rhetoric and that of the Minister of Financial Institutions.

The simple fact is that in those three western provinces combined, the frequency of accidents over the last five years per 100 cars is 40 per cent higher than it is here. That is not the reason that the rates are cheaper out there; nor is it because of subsidization that the rates are cheaper out there. It is simply that they have a system that is far more efficient, where all the interest on investment is returned to the system and where it is a nonprofit system. Those three things are the reason.

1630

Even though this House passed a resolution which the Conservatives supported, the Minister of Financial Institutions has refused to investigate because he does not want to know. He could not get up and make a lot of those statements if he had a report that showed the benefits of the public plans in the west.

We are going to keep fighting for the only real alternative to what we have in this province: a driver-owned public insurance plan which can solve our problems.

Mr. Offer: I have read in part some of the motion of the member for Welland-Thorold, and there are a couple of points that he brings out. He talks about "failure to take effective action" and about "incoherent and incomprehensible policy." If I might, I would like to take the time allotted to me to bring to you, Mr. Speaker, the effective action that the government has taken and the coherent and comprehensible policies that this government is following.

I know I have spoken before on insurance and other matters the member for Welland-Thorold has brought to this House, and have spoken with respect to general liability insurance. We have spoken on the issue of general liability and on the singular efforts of the Minister of Financial Institutions in this government and his pronouncements and policy decisions to address those particular problems. We have spoken previously about reciprocals and telephone assist programs and export pools.

I bring this out because the member for Welland-Thorold—and I think this is a fair statement—has basically made the same allegations with respect to general liability insurance and the problems that arose with respect to the general liability insurance system as he does today. The efforts and actions by this minister and this government have in large measure come to grips with those problems and have provided real solutions in a meaningful way.

I would like to continue with respect to the auto insurance initiatives that this minister has

announced. Over the past year, we know the consumer confidence and trust in the auto insurance industry have faltered, and for many months the government has been closely monitoring automobile insurance rates and the underwriting practices of the auto insurance industry to determine whether there is fundamental fairness for the consumer.

A review of the numerous consumer complaints received by the ministry indicates that too many of their complaints are valid. For example, under the same classification, rates can vary by more than 100 per cent from company to company. There have also been refusals to insure drivers, the dumping of drivers into the Facility Association where the highest rates are charged and the penalizing of good drivers because of the driving record of another member of the household. Consumers are demanding fair coverage at a fair price and we believe their demands are justified, particularly in a system where automobile insurance is compulsory.

We have given the insurance industry the time and opportunity to improve market fairness. The minister has repeatedly urged the industry to improve its practices voluntarily. The industry has been urged to prepare for nondiscriminatory rating practices, and nothing has come about. Instead, much effort has been expended by the industry in defending current practices.

In view of these circumstances, it was necessary to take immediate steps to protect Ontario consumers, but before describing those initiatives, I want to address that part of the motion that talks about incoherency and incomprehensibility, because I want to point out that those initiatives are but one part of our overall approach to the insurance issue.

As members know, Mr. Justice Coulter Osborne is examining the long-term savings and benefits which might result from a no-fault insurance system, whether private or state-owned, and is expected to report in November.

These new initiatives of April 23 are in no way meant to pre-empt the Osborne recommendations. Indeed, it may be necessary to make some adjustments in these recent initiatives once the Osborne commission reports. In the meantime, however, we have taken some necessary steps to protect consumers. That addresses the question with respect to coherency and comprehensibility.

I would now like to talk about effective action. As at April 23 of this year, rates with respect to insurance for all types of motor vehicles are capped, including those in the Facility Association. The cap provides that the rate related to a

specific class or factor used to set premiums by individual insurance companies cannot increase beyond its level on April 23. It is not a freeze on premiums. The cap prevents increases in anticipation of rate control and stops any increases that would have been made after April 23. It applies to liability insurance, collision and comprehensive insurance, accident benefits, special perils and policy endorsements. Consumers facing renewals may experience an increase in their premiums, but the highest possible rate they will have to pay will be what was in place for their classification as at April 23, 1987.

Again addressing the question of effective action, I talk about the rate reduction effective April 23, which was ordered for two rating classifications in which increases have been subject to particularly serious impact. Rates for all male drivers under age 25 will be reduced by 10 per cent and rates for taxi cabs insured through the Facility Association will be cut by 10 per cent. Those young male drivers facing renewals may experience an increase, but the highest possible rate they will have to pay will be the capped amount as at April 23, minus the 10 per cent.

For those taxis not in the Facility Association, insurance companies will be prohibited from charging more than the Facility Association rates. When a policyholder is entitled to a reduction, the insurer will be required to offer the option of a cash rebate.

Again with respect to effective action, it has been mentioned that legislation will be introduced to control all automobile insurance premiums in Ontario through an independent rate review board with powers to approve, adjust or roll back rates and order rebates to policyholders. Current caps will remain in effect until the rate review board approves new rates.

We intend to establish a permanent, independent rate review board which will be led by a full-time chairperson and a panel of part-time members. The board will be supported by a secretariat which will maintain public information on rates and administer the public hearing process. Members of the rate review board will be appointed by order in council following consultation with groups such as automobile associations, consumer groups, insurance companies, insurance agents, brokers and adjusters, professional organizations, commercial consumers of insurance and municipal transit authorities.

The mandate of the board will be to set rate ranges for all types of motor vehicle insurance, to review rates that were capped or reduced on April

23 and to hold public hearings on insurance rates, inviting representations by all concerned parties.

In making its rulings, the board will take into account public policy guidelines issued by the government. For the first time, consumer groups, individuals and the government will be able to appear and make representations during public hearings conducted by the board. Premium rates will no longer be determined in isolation by vested business interests.

1640

Again, with respect to effective action, I talk about the government moving immediately to establish a consumer insurance bureau headed by an insurance advocate who will provide information and assist consumers. Legislation will be introduced to ensure that the advocate has the power to investigate and publish complaint records of companies.

We are addressing effective action in initiating procedures against insurance companies, introducing legislation to provide for enhanced penalties and administrative actions, requiring insurers to provide 45 days' written notice of intention, prohibiting insurers from charging a higher premium solely on the ground that an individual who is a qualified driver was not continuously a named insured during his or her—

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired.

Mr. Offer: This minister and this government have provided effective, comprehensive, understandable policy for the first time in this province.

Mr. Swart: Premiums will be up eight per cent to 39 per cent with the rate review board.

Mr. Offer: The member may not agree with that, but he cannot deny this is an effective action program.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat? I hope the member for Welland-Thorold will control himself.

Mr. Swart: Of course.

Mr. Speaker: If that is the case, I will now recognize the member for Mississauga East.

Mr. Gregory: I hesitate to get in between the bedmates of the accord in this lovers' quarrel.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) and the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip), are you finished?

Mr. Philip: Yes.

Mr. Offer: I cannot say yes for sure.

Mr. Speaker: Fine.

Mr. Gregory: Mr. Speaker, when you said, "Are you finished?" that was probably an understatement. I truly believe both parties are finished, the way they are handling this particular matter.

I find it quite amusing. As a person who has spent the greater part of my life in the insurance business, when I hear the rhetoric coming from both sides in this place, it is quite astounding to me.

Mr. Swart: Of course, you are totally unbiased.

Mr. Gregory: The member for Welland-Thorold has a great deal to say. For a person who has never ever sold or written an insurance policy in his life, he seems to know an inordinate amount about it. As a matter of fact, he knows nothing about it. The only person who knows less about it is the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations. He totally confuses me by what he is doing to the disturbed insurance market of Ontario. No matter how bad it is and no matter how bad it needs revising, the minister has not really added one thing to the debate that would comfort anybody that anything good is going to happen in this business. As a former insurance agent, I find that very distressing.

We hear conflicting statements. For example, on January 9, the minister said: "Whether the government should be in the insurance business is a decision that has to be made. If the task force says that is the solution, then I will look at it and address it." In other words, he was going to give serious consideration to state-run insurance.

On February 4, which by my calculations is about 26 days later, the Treasurer said: "The last thing the insurance industry wants is for government to get into the insurance business. We certainly do not want to get into it."

I am wondering if any of those over there in cabinet talk to one another. Do they have any kind of dialogue at all that would indicate they have a common front coming out of that cabinet? Right now, the statements that are being made regarding the insurance business are certainly confusing, to say the least.

At least my friend the member for Welland-Thorold will know that I am the last person in the world who would agree on the position he has taken—and that is a given—but still and all, even he is beginning to make sense to me on this subject. I find that a little frightening. When the member for Welland-Thorold is making sense, I think it is time I changed my position.

However, we seem to have some sort of competition between the government party and the New Democratic Party about which is going to come down the hardest on the insurance industry. From my standpoint, I am beginning to wonder, is this really what we are trying to do? Do we want to completely destroy the insurance industry? I do not know that this is a very desirable thing for Ontario.

I believe the insurance industry has on the whole been of great benefit to this province. We have a temporary crisis we are going through, and I realize there are problems there; but it has to be fixed, it does not have to be kicked to death.

Certainly, neither solution I have heard is going to do a thing. On this side, to my left, the party of last resort is saying we should get rid of it all and have a state-run insurance program; while my friends in the government party across the way are saying: "We will study it to death. We are going to have yet another task force and we are going to study it." I think that makes 362 task forces on the government side in the last two years. They are waiting for reports and nobody seems to be able to make a decision; except when the heat gets on the honourable Minister of Financial Institutions suddenly, arbitrarily, out of the blue, picks a figure and says, "We are going to freeze rates and we are going to reduce two categories by 10 per cent: the young drivers and the taxi drivers."

I have, Lord knows, nothing against either group. I know some of each. They are the highest-risk categories. How can we suddenly, out of the blue, say there will be a reduction of 10 per cent for the worst categories? The main thing is that it is not fair. It is not fair to the people who are not in high-risk categories who will be subsidizing these two categories.

Surely that is not the way to address these things. These Band-Aid approaches to the problems we are having in the insurance industry have not gone far enough. Is it not time we had some sort of meaningful dialogue between the minister and the insurance industry itself? If the insurance industry wants to continue to service Ontario, I feel it should be willing, and I believe it is willing, to sit down with the minister and have some meaningful dialogue on this, instead of the government commissioning yet another study.

This board they were talking about which will have the right to freeze or roll back rates but will not necessarily have the right to freeze or roll back rates: we do not seem to have an answer on what rights it is going to have, but we will play it

by the day. I see no value at all in having a board if we cannot give it some terms of reference by which it can operate intelligently. I believe we have time to do this.

My friend the member for Essex North (Mr. Hayes) read two or three letters from people in his riding complaining about excessive rates, and probably these people are being gouged, but any day of the week in my riding, which at present has about 115,000 people, if I cannot get 10 letters complaining in writing about something it is a bad day.

This does not necessarily mean it reflects the feelings of everybody in that riding. Before we get up on our high horse and charge off into the night, tilting at windmills, with instant solutions and freezing rates or creating a government body—I think the brightest thing the minister said was that if one likes the post office one will love government-run insurance. That is probably the most intelligent statement he has made in this whole debate. I do not think we can afford to be doing that. We have to think in terms of some sort of negotiated settlement, and I believe insurance companies are only too willing to do this. Certainly, insurance agents are.

One of the problems I see—and my friend the member for Mississauga North touched on this—is the speed with which the insurance companies or insurance agents refer cases to the Facility Association. This has become the biggest scam of all, to my way of thinking.

We have seen it happen where someone makes an application for insurance and for some reason—perhaps the insurance agent's portfolio is too full of a particular risk—rather than sending him on even to another broker who might handle him, he refers him immediately to the Facility Association. That means he can be charged any amount the Facility Association wants. That means the Facility Association will take him, but surely the minister can negotiate some rule whereby it eliminates the power of insurance companies and agents to send these cases arbitrarily to the Facility Association.

Maybe insurance companies should be required to accept the risks. They are not going to get all the high risks. They are going to get their share. I do not think there is too much wrong with that. Everybody should take a share of the risk in that business, but when we start talking about sending everything to the Facility Association when there is the slightest risk the company does not want to take, that is totally ridiculous. I suspect that a lot of the letters we get and that my friend the member for Essex North got were

probably from someone who had been referred to the Facility Association.

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My friend the member for Welland-Thorold referred to a case that went from \$300 up to \$3,000. There is no doubt in my mind and there should not be any doubt in his that this was a Facility Association case. It would have to be. I do not think you can blame the insurance company or the insurance agent for this; perhaps the insurance agent because he did not want to add this high risk to his personal portfolio. Maybe that was his problem. That is selfish. Maybe the system is wrong and maybe it needs something, but I do not think you throw out the baby with the bath water. You do not throw out the whole system simply because we can come up with some instances and testimonials of somebody getting hit. I just find it a little frightening to think in terms of going from one to the other.

There is all kinds of evidence that insurance run by government is not too accurate. For example, last December, John Bucklaschuk, minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corp., appeared at Queen's Park as a guest of the member for Welland-Thorold and praised the virtues of state insurance. He did not say anything about the fact that at that moment Gary Filmon was securing him for potential losses of \$36.7 million in that insurance industry in that province.

Mr. Wildman: I have listened to this debate this afternoon to try to determine what is in fact happening with insurance, what the government intends to do and what the position of the official opposition is. Frankly, I have not found it very enlightening.

I am disappointed that the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions is not in the House to listen to the debate. I think that is an indication of his concern about insurance and his realization of the problems consumers are facing across this province. He contributed to the debate earlier and then left. I think it is most unfortunate that he did not listen to what has been said in the rest of the debate.

I have listened to what the members of the official opposition have had to say and I think they are having the problems of the proverbial man who stands with one foot on each side of a picket fence.

Mr. Hayes: Ouch.

Mr. Wildman: Yes, ouch.

The fact is that we have presented a position in response to the crisis in insurance. It is clear. We have made proposals and all we get from the other two parties is obfuscation.

The fact is that the New Democrats are not attempting to discredit the private insurance industry. We do not have to. Those insurance companies themselves, through their practices and their advertising, are doing all that is necessary to discredit the image of the private insurance industry in the public's eyes. For instance, I will quote from an ad run by the Co-operators recently: "Rapid steps are needed to correct problems. Stop charging drivers higher rates than their experience, vehicle use and accident conviction records warrant. Stop assigning to the higher rate Facility plan drivers who do not represent a higher risk."

The New Democrats or the member for Welland-Thorold were not the ones who ran that ad. That is the Co-operators insurance company itself recognizing the kinds of things insurance companies have been doing to consumers in this province that is resulting in them paying exorbitantly high rates.

Besides that, we all know that the insurance companies' profits have gone up tremendously over the past year, something in the neighbourhood of \$1 billion in total for all types of insurance. There has been a 45 per cent increase in rates over the past year and it is still going on.

We have had examples presented to us in the House. I have mentioned before the example of a 21-year-old male driver with three years of driving record who owns his own car, a 1985 Reliant, in Bruce Mines in my riding who would have to pay approximately \$2,544 a year for insurance. His counterpart in Manitoba would pay something like \$450 for insurance. How can any Liberal or a Progressive Conservative in this House defend that kind of disparity? It is just beyond me.

Then we had the minister get up and say he had capped the rates. He capped the rates as of April 23. When this driver in Bruce Mines has to renew his insurance, it will not be at \$2,544. It will be at that rate plus something like a 30 per cent increase up until April 23. Then the minister has argued, "That kind of driver will get a 10 per cent rebate." We have no assurance that is going to happen. Apparently, it is going to be up to the insurance companies themselves to give this rebate; but even if they do, with a 10 per cent rebate on a \$3,000 premium, he is still going to be paying enormously more than anybody in any

of the three provinces with driver-owned insurance plans.

The fact is that the drivers in this province are being ripped off by a private insurance monopoly that has within it the seeds of its own destruction. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, we have an effective system, one that is not in the red as the minister and the members of the Conservative Party would like us to believe.

Mr. Epp: Look at last year's books. You are cooking the books.

Mr. Wildman: The books have been explained. The member does not have to listen to me. He should listen to the studies that have been done by others, certainly not supporters of the New Democratic Party. The Globe and Mail did a study that found that if we had a similar plan in Ontario, it would save the drivers about 36 per cent in their premiums. That is not a New Democratic Party periodical. That is the Globe and Mail, Canada's national newspaper. The Canadian Press has estimated something like a 40 per cent savings if we went to a similar plan.

Since 1982, the rates in this province have increased 65 per cent, whereas in Manitoba and British Columbia they have gone up approximately 2.4 per cent or 2.5 per cent a year. In Saskatchewan they have actually decreased.

Despite what the member for Waterloo North (Mr. Epp) would like us to believe, not one red cent of government money has gone into the Saskatchewan auto insurance plan. It is true that the government has put money into other forms of insurance. It is true that in Manitoba they had, at least up until 1978, a two-cent-per-gallon tax that went into the insurance plan to ensure that drivers who drove long distances paid more. I do not see anything wrong with that, but it was discontinued in 1978.

The books that the member for Waterloo North refers to deal with losses in Manitoba that did not relate to the auto insurance plan but rather to the reinsurance. Perhaps they had unwise investments, but the investments were certainly not any more unwise than the investments that private industry in this province has engaged in.

We have heard from the members of the Conservative Party that the private insurers in this province are losing money on the premiums and that the rate board proposed by the minister will have to allow for increases so they can have any kind of profit. I do not claim to be a defender of the free enterprise system, but it seems to me that if a free enterprise company is losing money and has lost money over a long time, it should not be so concerned about getting out of the industry

or having someone else take it over. If it is losing so much money, why is it so determined to stay in business? No one has been able to explain that to me. The Conservatives say the insurance companies are losing money. They have lost money and it is a bad business, but they want to stay in the business. They do not want someone else to operate them. It does not make sense.

I want to help out the poor investors in the auto insurance industry in this province. I want to save them from their losses. I want to help them to cut losses. I want to help them with the bottom line. I want to get rid of the private insurance monopoly and to have a public plan that will be effective and serve the drivers and will be done at cost rather than allowing for the kinds of exorbitant profits that the Leader of the Opposition wants to allow.

1700

In fact, as has been said, accident rates are lower in this province than in the western provinces. If anything, under the private plans we have now in Ontario, we should have lower rates based on driving records and accident records, not higher rates. The reason we have higher rates is that the plans, the operations of the industry in this province, are inefficient. They duplicate; they allow for profits; they allow for reinvestment in other things rather than keeping down premiums and covering claims.

There is an option. It is a sensible option. It is one that has been tried in the western provinces, and not just by New Democrats. In every case, it has been brought in by New Democrats but in every case where New Democrats have lost power in those provinces the new government, whether it be a Social Credit, Conservative or Liberal government, has maintained it. In fact, they praise it and want to strengthen it. The reason is that it is a good plan that serves the drivers and serves the province in a way no private system could ever do.

We must do something about the kinds of rates I quoted for my constituent in Bruce Mines. Why on earth should we be spending so much on insurance to try to assist the investors in the private insurance industry, rather than ensuring that what is invested in premiums covers claims and costs in a way that is nondiscriminatory and is not based on anything but the driver's record?

We have that option but we have two parties in this House that are afraid. Their fear is so great that they cannot take the step that, once taken, would benefit all the drivers of this province. We need a public insurance plan in this province and we are going to get it.

Mr. Epp: I am pleased to enter into this debate that my friend the member for Welland-Thorold has initiated. His name is synonymous with raising issues in this Legislature, many of which have been dealt with effectively by this government over the past two years.

As my honourable colleague stated earlier in this debate, this government has moved responsibly in taking effective action to protect the consumers of Ontario from instabilities in the auto insurance field.

Mr. Swart: Moving like a snail with arthritis.

Mr. Epp: I see my friend the member for Welland-Thorold is nodding consent to this and I am glad to see that.

The measures recently announced by the minister are a first step in this government's commitment to ensuring a reliable and effective insurance market for Ontario. This legislation is designed specifically to increase the fairness of Ontario insurance rates.

With respect to the call for a no-fault system, this government considers it imperative to know whether compensation to injured victims would be paid fairly and adequately under such a plan. As a result, the government has appointed Mr. Justice Osborne to complete a thorough study of motor vehicle accident compensation in Ontario and the possible benefits of implementing some form of no-fault insurance in this province.

Mr. McClellan: As a result—

Mr. Epp: As a result, I will continue.

Unlike the very vocal members of the third party, this government believes that a reasonable and sensible approach is required in addressing this issue. In this regard, our government has made it clear that we will not implement a public auto insurance system unless we are completely satisfied that such a system will benefit the motorists of this province and unless we are satisfied that the public will benefit by it.

In this respect—

Mr. Andrewes: That is not what the Premier said at Brock University.

Mr. Wildman: Not necessarily public insurance, but public insurance if necessary.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, the member for Algoma had his time earlier, and he noticed that I listened very attentively to what he was saying.

In this respect, in addition to the immediate measures already announced by the minister and in keeping with this government's philosophy of consultation and discussion, we will await the recommendations of this review.

We all know the current system needs improving. To quote recent correspondence from the industry itself, specifically The Co-operators insurance company, "We know that automobile insurance in Ontario is a problem begging for a solution."

We know that problems in availability of automobile insurance, sharp premium increases last year and the poor treatment policyholders sometimes receive from their insurers are all valid reasons consumers are dissatisfied. We also know that whatever further measures this government may consider to be warranted, they will not be knee-jerk reactions, as the third party suggests.

Our government is not interested in simplistic and short-term solutions. What we want, and what Ontarians want, is a made-in-Ontario solution. What we keep getting from across the way is a made-in-Manitoba solution, a made-in-Saskatchewan solution, a made-in-British Columbia, but not a made-in-Ontario solution.

Mr. Wildman: You have instituted a made-in-Quebec solution.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Algoma has already had his 10 minutes. The member for Waterloo North would like the balance of his 10 minutes now.

Mr. Epp: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is a very objective observation.

It is impossible to make simple comparisons between the insurance rates paid by drivers in the western provinces that have public automobile insurance and the rates paid by drivers in Ontario. In fact, we all know the statistics. We all know that Canada's private automobile insurance companies paid out almost \$3.5 billion in claims in 1985, an increase of 21 per cent over 1984, and we all know that certain high-risk groups have been paying disproportionately high and unfair amounts.

Unlike the leader of the third party who pulls statistics out of a hat—with devastating consequences for himself, I might add—this government believes in assessing the situation in a responsible and informed manner. I ask what the member for Welland-Thorold estimates insurance rates would be if we decided to institute a publicly run system in Ontario. He has not given it to us. I would also ask the honourable member about the startup cost of such a plan or the actual reduction in premiums that drivers would have to pay and would experience.

The leader of the third party has publicly stated that he does not want to get into a numbers game in this respect. I do not blame him. It would be

terribly embarrassing for him if he actually had to produce the kinds of rates he feels Ontario drivers would have to pay. No wonder he does not want to make them public. They would be embarrassing to himself and to his party. The answers to these and other questions must be addressed before changes are instituted. We cannot go on knee-jerk reaction.

I would also have expected that the third party would have done its homework better before jumping the gun on such a half-hearted and half-dreamt-up system. The New Democratic Party should have experienced better judgement before launching on its flashy, highway-robbery campaign.

This government will not allow robbery of the drivers of Ontario to occur, nor will it condone the implementation of any new system that robs from the pockets of the people of Ontario. In determining the need for change in the auto insurance industry, this government is determined to ensure that the new system will not require subsidies from the taxpayers of the province, not something that has been experienced in other provinces of this country. He knows and I know they have been subsidized in startup costs and in other ways, so to suggest that it does not occur—members should look at the facts and look at the statistics.

1710

I suggest that before any half-hearted, half-cooked, half-baked system—a system, like a sieve, with many holes in it—is adopted in this province, we have to do a thorough study. That is what has been suggested by this government, has been suggested through the Coulter Osborne study and has been suggested by other people. That is something this government is doing and it is something I am proud we are doing before coming in with the final solution to this problem.

Mrs. Marland: In rising today to speak in this emergency debate into the automobile insurance rates for the people of Ontario, the first statement I want to make is that in a province the size of ours, with the spread of the population and the spread of employment centres, we have to recognize, for the sake of our economy, that driving is not a luxury; it is a necessity. It is a necessity for in excess of six million drivers. The number of drivers who need to drive always increases in the summer, with young people with summer jobs and university students with part-time jobs.

The situation before us is one that all parties recognize is a problem. We recognize that the cost of insurance has steadily increased and, until

this past year, we have experienced a rapid escalation. Nobody is saying that does not exist. What we, as representatives of the public, are saying—because that is what the public is saying to us—is: “Let us look at the real reasons. Let us look at the real causes. Let us find the real solutions.”

It is very interesting when we hear some members of this Legislature who criticize completely the people in the industry. I would like to refer those people who make those criticisms to the industry that has provided a very real service for a great number of years. In recognizing the members of that industry, we also have to recognize that they themselves are saying today they realize changes have to be made.

The insurance brokers themselves are willing and, in fact, are looking at different combinations. They are also saying, in a release they put out on May 4, 1987—this is a release of the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario—that they do support an insurance rate review board. There is a very important sentence in the news release that I must read. It says, “The Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario welcomes the announcement that an independent automobile insurance rate review board will be established by the provincial government.”

This is the part that is important:

“If the rate review board operates without political interference, we are confident that stability will once again return to the Ontario marketplace, a stability that has long been absent. We look forward to the day when insurance prices will be determined primarily by mathematical analysis rather than the reckless marketing initiatives used previously by some irresponsible insurers. The rate review board will benefit all concerned: insurers, brokers and, most important, the consumer.”

It is also on behalf of the insurer that I wish to speak today. When we look at who drives, apart from the people who drive by necessity for their employment, we must also look very closely at the people who drive for reasons of medical treatment or who drive other people who require medical treatment. Where would we be if, as an alternative, these people had to be driven to their treatment centres by ambulances, taxis or, heaven forbid, public transportation? So when we look at the survival of people in our province who need to drive or be driven, we look at very serious human needs.

It is very interesting too, whilst we talk about this debate in this Legislature, that we are not at the same time saying to the federal government,

“When can we have a federal income tax amendment that deals with the lump sum settlement problem?” When we look at the reason that lump sum settlements are as high as they are, we also acknowledge the fact that 50 per cent of that settlement in most cases, right off the top, goes into the federal Treasury.

That particular process is completely wrong. If a person is disabled for life, whatever his impairment is, and he needs to be looked after for the rest of his life or his family needs to be looked after, then it would seem to me that that settlement is well due. I do not see that it is necessary for the federal Treasury to benefit from that accident or the cause of that person's disability.

It is very interesting, too, that in the free world today there exist only three government insurance schemes, those being in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I understand that Switzerland and France have crown corporations; I do not have the particulars on those. However, I think it speaks for itself if we find government insurance schemes in only three provinces in Canada and nowhere else in the world. I think there must be a reason.

The other thing that is to be considered when we look at the viability of those government-run schemes in our western provinces is the fact that the governments there do not pay property taxes on their buildings and they do not pay provincial taxes, so there is a double loss there to the provincial treasuries in those provinces.

When we talk about people requiring medical treatment, we are indeed talking about a survival need. When we look at the whole subject of who needs to be an insured driver, in the past we have looked at categories in a blanket format. The insurance industry itself today is saying that it is willing to reconsider the formula. It is willing to reconsider perhaps that people are innocent until they are proven guilty. That is the position our party supports; that, for example, people under the age of 25 are not necessarily totally irresponsible, incapable drivers. Perhaps, in fact, some of the people under 25 are very capable drivers and they should not all be blanketed together in one group.

In our party, we also support the idea of an insurance Ombudsman. That way we would know that, ultimately, there was equity for everyone; both the insurance industry and the drivers. We also feel there should be a guaranteed provision of insurance so that everyone who wishes to drive can be guaranteed access to insurance. We also agree with the placement of

the review board as long as the review board, as the Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario has stated, is not a political football. We also agree we should be looking at a modified no-fault program and we feel there should be a review of the tort system.

All in all, there are only three components of merit to this sensible discussion. They are: the cost of settlement; the fairness in apportionment of risk; and efficiency of the system as it serves the consumer.

1720

It is a fervent hope of mine, as I represent consumers who require automobile insurance and who live and do business in Mississauga South, that their needs will be met equitably as drivers. I also recognize there must be equity to those people who provide the service by being in the insurance business. I hope that very soon the government of this province will come to its senses and recognize that simply freezing the insurance rates where they are at the moment provides no service whatsoever for either the driver or the industry. It is simply a mediocre, stopgap system.

Mr. Philip: I would like to start off in this debate by dealing with the distortions of the previous speaker. They are distortions which are constantly being pushed in the fancy advertising campaigns of the insurance companies and through their mouthpieces, the Conservative and Liberal parties in this Legislature.

The suggestion that all the provinces' public insurance industries do not pay taxes is a complete and absolute distortion, a complete fabrication. It is simply not true. As the member should well know, the public insurance industry in each of the three provinces pays the same kind of grants in lieu of taxes that the provincial government pays to municipalities on any of its properties or, indeed, that the federal government pays.

If we look at the nonprofit insurance companies in this province—and there are nonprofit insurance companies even in terribly conservative Ontario; the lawyers have their own nonprofit insurance—they do not pay any corporation taxes because they are not showing a profit; in fact, they are pouring it back to the insurers. There is absolutely no difference between what the corporations are doing either here in Ontario as nonprofit corporations or in British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan as nonprofit insurance companies.

I wish members of the Conservative Party would stop allowing the insurance companies to

use them as their ventriloquists in spouting this kind of lie in the Ontario Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at some of the mail I have been receiving, I think we have the kind of problem that we are being faced with. I have a letter here from a constituent who lives on Rex Gate in Rexdale. He says: "I am 21 years old. I drive a 1975 car, but my insurance is \$1,200 per year." He goes to work in Brampton every day, and he says, "If insurance premiums keep increasing, I simply will not be able to drive a car." Knowing the transportation system which both the previous and the present provincial governments have supplied to northwest Metro and Peel, one can understand the problem this person is facing.

I heard from a gentleman the other day who wrote that his insurance had risen by over 100 per cent in one year. I have a letter here from a young woman, 23 years old: "I have been driving for three years safe and without any moving violations. For these past three years I have maintained my insurance with one company and up until now I have been pleased with their services. My insurance renewal comes due in mid-April and the quote I received from my company is \$243 higher than last year's, an overall increase of some 33 per cent."

Another constituent approached me the other day. In five years he had made claims totalling a maximum of \$1,000. He had been with the same insurance company for 24 years. Two of the claims were claims for damage that had been done wilfully to his car when he was not occupying it. Another was for somebody who managed to sideswipe his car while it was legally parked in front of his home. The three claims amounted to not more than \$1,000 over five years, yet his insurance premiums went up \$1,200 per year as a result of his being declared a risk. None of the accidents was his fault.

These are typical of the kinds of injustices created by the private insurance industry. The private insurers have taken advantage of the drivers of Ontario. The average Ontario driver pays \$210 more than his British Columbia counterpart, or in other words, 53 per cent more; \$281 or 87 per cent more than Manitoba; and \$377 or 165 per cent more than Saskatchewan.

The Liberals and the Conservatives can argue all they want. They cannot distort those figures. They are actual. They have been shown by comparisons, not just by the previous Conservative government in its own independent study, but by the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*

and anyone else who has done an independent study.

Since 1982, premiums have gone up 65 per cent in Ontario. For the same period, the average increase in Manitoba was 2.5 per cent a year; in BC, 2.4 per cent a year; and in Saskatchewan the premiums have actually decreased.

It is fairly clear that the campaign by consumers and the New Democrats has had a sobering effect on this present government. Whereas only a few months ago the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations was arguing the line of the Conservatives, that there is no problem, now he says there is a problem and he wants to tinker with it. He is going to tinker. The difference with the Conservatives, who have been absolutely silent for two years on the subject, is that they would tinker a little less. Now he states there is a problem so he has introduced immediate steps. Depending on which day one asks the minister, he says it applies to different people in different ways; and yes, some people's insurance would still go up but the category would not go up or the categories would change.

The first is the cap on the rates which he implied would prevent premium increases between the date of his statement, April 23, and the time when he proposed rate review sets new rates. However, in his formula for capping rates, we now learn he is going to allow an increase of up to two per cent monthly between the last time drivers renewed their insurance and April 23. Thus, the premium of any motorist who renews in May can go up by 10 per cent on a six-month policy and 22 per cent on a yearly policy. In June it will be eight per cent and 20 per cent. In subsequent months, that pattern will continue.

What kind of cap is that? If you like the minister's formula, if you like the Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada home warranty program in Ontario, you will love this. If you did not like the HUDAC home warranty program, if you were ripped off when you bought a new home, then you know the kind of self-policing this kind of system is going to have.

The Liberals are now touting and flirting with the idea of no-fault insurance. No-fault insurance under a private insurance company, the kind of no-fault that is being advocated, simply means that in order to sue one would either have to be killed, have a permanent disability or a disfigurement. If we look at what that means, only five per cent of those who have an accident through no fault of their own and who may feel they want

their day in court and want some justice would not be covered.

In other words, 95 per cent of all the claims would be decided by the private insurance companies. If you loved the HUDAC home warranty program, you will really love this. It will mean that the insurance companies decide what someone is going to get on a claim through their no-fault system. That is the direction in which the Liberals want to go. If we talk about a justice system, my goodness, what could be more unjust than that? If we think the insurance companies are ripping off the public now, give them the kind of no-fault towards which they and the Liberals seem to be headed and we will really see what they can do to us.

We talked a minute ago about that young male under 25 who is going to get this great gift from the government. Even if the 10 per cent reduction to the under-25 males was genuine, that minimum amount is really an insult to them. If we take a specific example, we see what it does.

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First, if on June 23, 1986, the under-25 male paid \$2,000, he will receive a 10 per cent refund on the premium for two months, which is \$33. When he renews his insurance on June 23, his insurance company will be allowed its normal increased rates, from June 23 to April 23, 1987, estimated at two per cent monthly.

Thus, his premium will be 20 per cent higher than last year so he will pay \$2,400, except that he will have received the 10 per cent reduction that will be applied to it. In other words, it will be \$2,160. In effect, he will be paying \$160 more this year than last year under the so-called cap program.

This is the kind of program on which the Liberal Party says that it is saving the taxpayers' money, that it is saving the consumers. What rubbish.

Mr. Ferraro: It is my pleasure to contribute what I can to this debate. Having listened to the debate since about 3:45 p.m., it is at moments like this that I wish the House had a retractable roof. I have heard more hot air in the last two hours than perhaps I care to remember.

Mr. Swart: Your colleagues do not like that. Neither does the minister.

Mr. Ferraro: Wait a minute. There is an old cliché in refereeing, "When in doubt, shout." Maybe that is why there is such an emotional response from the members of the New Democratic Party.

First, I should say so that the table is set, lest I be accused of being biased, that in my riding in the beautiful city of Guelph I have two insurance companies. It is the head office for the Co-Operators, a very large employer and a very good company. It is also the head office for the Halwell Mutual Fire Insurance Co.

Mr. Swart: Co-Op is the best of a bad lot.

Mr. Ferraro: I would be careful before I would criticize Co-Op. One of the substantial owners of Co-Op is a number of unions. Be careful, fellows.

Mr. Swart: Name them.

Mr. Ferraro: I want to make two points. The timing of this emergency debate did not make it conducive for me to do extensive research in order to prepare myself in the fashion that certainly the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel)—

Interjections.

Mr. Ferraro: —who I know is sitting on the edge of his seat so he can listen to me—

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ferraro: I hope it has nothing to do with the fact that I am speaking, but at present in the House for the emergency debate there are four Progressive Conservatives, six New Democrats and eight Liberals.

Mr. Philip: Where is your minister on this emergency debate?

Mr. Ferraro: Lest there be an inference that it is my rhetorical ability that has attracted such a sparse crowd, I want to bring it into context of the fact that this was such an emergency that we had to delay the full agenda of the House; it was of paramount necessity that the House deal with insurance.

At four o'clock, when the debate was getting under way, there were six New Democrats, three Progressive Conservatives and eight Liberals.

Mr. Philip: There are also committees sitting.

Mr. Ferraro: At 4:12, when the leader of the third party spoke, there were seven Progressive Conservatives, six Liberals and six of the NDP. When the leader of the Progressive Conservative Party spoke there were six New Democrats, six Conservatives and seven Liberals. When the outspoken critic, whom I have listened to on many occasions, with much pleasure and amusement, spoke—

Mr. Philip: Why do you not talk about insurance? You do not have anything to say on insurance, do you?

Mr. Ferraro: The members all lost sleep last night waiting in anticipation for this session to begin. It is of such paramount significance to the province that at no time did any caucus have more than 10 people in the House. We are talking of 125 members.

It is amazing too—it never ceases to amaze me—that when the Leader of the Opposition got up to speak, there were six PC members and, coincidentally, all six members were sitting around him. It is as if there were a magnet or something and, coincidentally, they were all sitting in that one spot. I do not know what television cameras do, but it never ceases to amaze me that the power of concentration is always around the Leader of the Opposition.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ferraro: The opposition parties are critical. We voted against the debate. At least we are not hypocritical. If it was such an emergency, why is their full caucus not here, instead of six members?

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ferraro: They have four in opposition, and it was of such paramount significance that we had to have it.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Perhaps if the member for Wellington South would address his remarks to the chair, there would be fewer interjections.

Mr. Ferraro: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At least I have their attention, which is something.

Notwithstanding the hypocritical, in my view, position of the opposition parties in calling an emergency debate, the real issue is a very basic one. I can criticize as much as anybody else can, but I want to give the third party credit, in particular the member for Welland-Thorold, for bringing this issue to the fore at a greater speed perhaps than it would have been. I admit that, as an individual member.

What I really despise is the fact that, all of a sudden, the official opposition is jumping on the bandwagon. I think the third party should send them a bill; charge them rent for finding an issue for them. For the Leader of the Opposition to stand up here and say, "At least I respect the NDP, but I do not agree with what the government is doing"—was it any different, to some degree, in 1975 with rent controls? The NDP, at least, is fulfilling its mandate as opposition. I do not always agree with them—very seldom—but at least they bring the issue to

the front, and they do not jump on the bandwagon, as the opposition does.

The issue is very basic. The issue is: Do you want government-run insurance or do you want private insurance and free enterprise? It is very basic. All the rhetoric and all the verbiage about torts and the verbiage about no-fault, smart insurance is confusing. It is confusing not only to most of the members but also to most of the people in Ontario. But what they do understand and what the third party brings to the fore very capably is, "Mr. and Mrs. Voter, Mr. and Mrs. Resident of Ontario, we can save you \$400." Everybody understands that, but what they do not tell them is what it is actually going to cost them.

I want to quote from a progressive reporter by the name of Goldstein, who is quoted as saying:

"Mr. Swart will tell you that publicly run auto insurance schemes in British Columbia, Manitoba and Saskatchewan provide cheaper auto insurance rates than privately run ones in Ontario, but what he does not tell you is that in 1976 the Insurance Corp. of British Columbia went bankrupt and had to be bailed out with \$181 million worth of taxpayers' money.

"He won't tell you that in 1982, Saskatchewan Government Insurance received a \$72-million subsidy—

Mr. Swart: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: Subsequent to that article, Mr. Goldstein said that the NDP policy made more sense than what the Liberals proposed.

The Deputy Speaker: That is not a point of privilege.

Mr. Ferraro: I will repeat this.

"He won't tell you that in 1982, Saskatchewan Government Insurance received a \$72-million subsidy. Mr. Swart won't tell you that in 1975 to 1978 the Manitoba Public Insurance Corp. received \$18.6 million in gasoline tax transfers alone. He won't tell you that the British Columbia insurance company is exempt from provincial and federal taxes that private insurers must pay."

While I can say on reading Mr. Goldstein's column it is normally lethargic, I happen to agree with him on this issue.

What it does not say is exactly this: Can the government do what private enterprise, in my view, can do better? Can the government make it cheaper? I say no. Can the government give you better service? I say no. Can the government guarantee that the net outlay of taxpayers' dollars is going to be less than if it is left in the hands of

private enterprise? I say unequivocally, in my view, no.

The government can do it, but at a greater cost, at the creation of a greater bureaucracy, at the creation of a type of bureaucratic arrogance—if I can use that—that is not appealing and conducive to the consumer. Private enterprise is much more adept at dealing with the public in general, and much more capable of dealing with the insurance problem.

1740

In the presentation of his motion, the member for Welland-Thorold said there was concern and anger in the public. With the greatest respect to my friends in the third party, the concern and anger is with the New Democratic Party itself, because its main platform for the next election has been pulled out from under it. The government is addressing it. The government is creating a system whereby the concerns of the consumer, the small businessman, the home owner and the car owner will be more readily addressed and in a more democratic way, for lack of a better word.

Private enterprise in our province is alive and well. I would like to send some forget-me-nots or a crying towel over to the members of the third party, but I suspect they are going to carry on with this façade. Who knows, we may have another emergency meeting tomorrow afternoon on the same issue.

Mr. Baetz: The previous Liberal speaker talked about some hypocrisy in this House. Now that he has taken his seat, those Liberals who drifted over there so they could be sure the seats looked full for the cameras and our TV audience can now go back home or leave the House. For a rookie, he has caught on to one or two of the little games that go on around here. I do not think much more of him for it, I will tell him that.

I stand here too as someone who has had the extreme sting of increased automobile insurance premiums, and I speak for a riding where I have heard a lot from my constituents about that equal sting of the increased premiums. But I must say that I do not agree with our socialist friends down here to the left who, recognizing there is a problem—and there is no denying there is a problem—put the quick fix on it. They always like to put the quick fix on it and turn it over to government. More legislation and away we go; that is the final and only solution for every single problem in this province. At least they are consistent, and we respect them for it.

Even though we do not agree with the New Democrats' position, the government's position on this is really something else; it is a hotchpotch.

For weeks now, we have seen the Minister of Financial Institutions standing up here trying to tell us what his measures would do to improve the automobile insurance business. Doubletalk. I understand that our eminent minister, before he went into politics, was a manufacturer of sausage; he was a salami manufacturer, I believe. He has been trying to con us on this side into believing that you can make a bigger salami—or a bigger bologna, I guess—with less meat. That is what he has been trying to tell us, and really it has been very confusing.

Of course, we know where the minister gets his instructions, as every minister on that side of the House gets his instructions—from the front office. Ministers in this government have very little to say; they get their orders from down the hall. So has the Minister of Financial Institutions, who has been very embarrassed by the whole situation, as he certainly should be. As far as the Premier and this government are concerned, they are not interested in better automobile insurance; they are interested in voter insurance, election insurance. That is their big interest here.

As an admitted and proud free-enterpriser, as one who believes that government should correct but not take over businesses that are abusing the public, I would certainly say we are here to say that no government-run automobile insurance should be enacted in this province. We do not believe in bargain-basement premiums at the cost of direct or indirect subsidy by the taxpayers, many of them nondrivers and including many senior citizens. I have many in my riding who no longer drive a car, but if we introduce a government-run insurance system here, as sure as night follows day we are going to be subsidizing that system through the tax system and there are going to be a lot of people who do not drive cars but who are going to have to pay for it. Certainly we do not believe in that kind of system at all.

We are prepared to consider reform of the no-fault automobile insurance already existing in Ontario, but we would not support legislation that unduly restricted the right of people to avail themselves of due process through the courts to seek reparation for damages sustained in automobile accidents. We think that if structured properly, extension of the present no-fault system might be helpful, but we would oppose any attempt to turn the approach to automobile insurance into that of the Workers' Compensation Board, using sort of the meat chart approach.

We believe that if the system exists to serve the consumers, and we assume that is what it is there for, then some dramatic reforms are required. We recognize that. If the product that is sold is to protect the persons and property of the citizens that the insurance industry is to serve, then we know there are weaknesses and problems in the system. However, we believe it can be reformed. There has been study after study of premium costs, compensation, settlement delays and rehabilitation, and the thorns still fester. We know there are problems, and we certainly agree there has to be some reform.

Time and time again we have heard the example of all young drivers being discriminated against in their premiums. We think that is something that has to be corrected. I suspect this is a traditional thing because at my vintage, when I first got my driver's licence at the age of 16, the way we did it in the great city of Chesley—that is the territory of the member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Sargent)—I did not have one day's driving in driving school—nothing.

I went down to Frank Murphy, who ran the local tailor shop; he also issued the licences and gave us the examination. Frank Murphy had one good way to give us the examination and the driver's licence. At that time, Chesley was a dry town; it had no pub. But Elmwood, which is five miles away, had a pub. Frank always told the young people who came to him for the driver's examination, "Take me to Elmwood." We would take him down to Elmwood and he would step in and have about four or five beers; we would bring him back home, he would give us the driver's licence and that was it.

I will admit that we, as young drivers at that time, were maybe not the best-trained drivers in the world, and perhaps we were a greater menace on the road. I will admit that, but today I have three young children, a son and two daughters, and when they got their drivers' licences, they had to go through extensive driver's training school. One failed and had to go back, but by the time they got their licences, they were probably better drivers than I was. I would never admit that to them directly, but the fact is that today we are putting on the road very excellent young drivers.

Quite frankly, I for one do not see why the insurance industry should then penalize these people and should in effect even break the basic principle of our common law that one is innocent until proven guilty. Why should my son or my two daughters have to pay a higher insurance premium—and come to the old man to collect it, I might say, or they did anyway before they were

independent—when in fact they were better drivers than I perhaps was? They had no accident records and yet they had to pay more insurance. I think that is the kind of thing the insurance company has to look at in a more objective way. We have to make some corrections in that.

As I say, there are many other aspects of the current insurance premium rating business that have to be corrected. We know that, but we do not agree with the quick-fix approach by very honest, genuine and sincere people like my good friend and colleague the member for Welland-Thorold, who would simply turn it over to government, and everything will then fall in place. We have turned over enough things to government and know it does not work as easily as that.

1750

One of the members here from the New Democratic Party seemed to complain that Ontario was too conservative, that it is a conservative province. I happen to think this is the greatest province in Canada. I am very proud of the fact that it is a conservative province. We have come a long way through private enterprise here, and if we get together and work with private enterprise, we too will correct what is now a not totally perfect system. We are going to do it without resorting to government. With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for the time.

Mr. Warner: I must say I am pleased to hear that the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz) is no longer terrorizing the good citizens of Chesley with his driving. That is certainly an improvement for the good people of Chesley.

I suspect there must be a number of members in here who have quite deficient memories, because it was all three parties that participated in the committee which in 1977 took a look at—

Mr. Callahan: That was before our time.

Mr. Cordiano: That was prehistory.

Mr. Warner: Yes, it was before you folks, but not before all your members. There are members opposite and members from the Conservative Party who participated on that committee and took a look at car insurance plans as they were operating then and still operate today in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

All three parties were told very clearly, not just by NDP governments but also by Conservative and Social Credit governments, that they were keeping the auto insurance plans because they worked better than anything else.

The Social Credit minister responsible for it said: "I would not give up this plan to the private

insurance companies, because the plan works better than what the private insurance companies could deliver. It is more efficient and it is cheaper."

That was not enough for the ideologically straitjacketed members of the Conservative and Liberal parties. We then turned to the highly vaunted private sector for an evaluation and engaged the services of that very prestigious firm, Woods Gordon.

Woods Gordon examined the plans out west and, lo and behold, came up with the same analysis. Woods Gordon said, "If we had a publicly run plan in Ontario, drivers would save approximately 30 per cent on their premiums." That was in 1977 terms. Woods Gordon also said the public plans were more efficient.

That was not good enough for our friends who are so myopic in their approach to things, so we then turned to the auditors. As members know, the public auditor in each province which has a public plan is obliged to scrutinize the books. Lo and behold, when the books are scrutinized the public plan comes out ahead in every instance.

Interjection.

Mr. Warner: The member may wish to attack the integrity of the public auditor, but I think he is on very dangerous ground when he attempts to do that. Surely even Liberals recognize the public auditor is an honest individual whose recommendation should be taken seriously.

The public auditors say the plans work without subsidy, Woods Gordon says they are more efficient and cheaper, and Tory, Liberal and Social Credit governments have sustained the programs brought in by New Democrats.

Like other members, I have received numerous letters and complaints about the piracy that is being inflicted upon the good citizens of Ontario. I want to read members one such letter. If we want to talk about how inefficient the private insurance company is, this one is a gem. This gentleman, a constituent of mine, has been a client of Safeco Insurance Co. of America for 20 years. He returns home from Expo '86 and finds a registered letter from the company informing him his insurance had been cancelled and no reason given. I am quoting from the letter:

"I called my agent and he informed me that I had accumulated 10 points and that I was no longer a preferred risk. I asked him what I should do and he said, 'Shop around.' I shopped around, as I was instructed to do, and found that in order to be insured I would have to pay at least \$3,000 per year, six months at a time and payable in advance.

"The nature of my job requires me to drive, so I have to be insured. Two months later, my wife receives a call from the new broker informing her that I have another charge against me and that an additional premium of \$707 is required. This information was received from Safeco which, upon my query, informed me that it must have been a misinterpretation of the numbers of the date of the charge. I personally inquired from the motor vehicles branch and found that this information given by one insurance company to another was erroneous.

"I called my new broker and was informed it was a fact and I still owed the extra premium. I called Safeco and complained that they had no right to give out wrong information, and they acknowledged that they were corrected. As of this day, it has still not been corrected.

"To complicate matters, when I was notified that I was no longer insured by Safeco, I informed my daughter and son that they should apply for insurance from another company as they were both on my insurance.

"My daughter applied for insurance with Cornhill, a company that is involved with her place of employment. Two months after being reinsured she gets a notice of cancellation because her husband has a bad driving record. This information was given by Safeco to her new company. Somewhere along the line my daughter's father became her husband, and now she has a cancellation, which means that in order to be reinsured one must pay a premium because they have been cancelled.

"My daughter is in no way a poor risk; she does not have any points against her. But because the computer or someone else involved in Safeco said she has a husband"—and she is not married—"who has a bad driving record"—so the company invents a husband then invents a bad driving record to go along with the fictitious husband—

Mr. Callahan: Does this have a happy ending?

Mr. Warner: It is not over—"then she must pay a penalty; namely, being chastised for something she had nothing to do with. She has a black mark against her driving record for some ineptitude of my former insurance company. It strikes me that this is unforgivable and outrageous. How does one go about clearing one's name for something one did not do? I can only

say that Safeco Insurance is at fault here and that something should be done.

"In my own case, as far as the erroneous information is concerned, I can only say I have been victimized and as I am only an ordinary citizen, it is too bad. The numbers game killed me, not my driving record. It is ironic that I am a poor risk as a driver but an insurance company will insure me as long as I pay for it. Why should my daughter have to suffer for my sins? Because an insurance company made a mistake, the computer will read out 'Cancellation,' and then more bucks in the pocket of the money-hungry insurance companies. Where sits the justice? Surely not in favour of the customer."

He is one of the many victims of an insurance industry which has really gone astray. Briefly, the Maple Leaf Taxicab Co. rates: in 1984, \$1,250; 1985-86, \$2,500; 1986-87, \$9,000 per car, an increase of \$6,500 per car, a total for the fleet of a \$390,000 increase, to which the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations has the nerve, the colossal gall, to suggest that there would be a decrease of 10 per cent, a saving of \$39,000 out of a bill that is so astronomical as to put this company out of business.

To use the words of the man at the local garage where I take my car, after the announcement that came out from the minister, he asked me in all sincerity: "Why does the government insult my intelligence? What they have suggested will do absolutely nothing to help me. Why do they insult my intelligence?" They insult the intelligence of so many people because they are not prepared to have the political will and courage to bring in what is needed, a public car insurance plan.

Mr. Harris: Could I get into the debate?

The Deputy Speaker: No, I am sorry. The time has expired.

Mr. Harris: Maybe I could ask unanimous consent of the House to carry on for another hour or so, if nobody objects.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Did the member for Brampton wish to—

Mr. Callahan: Yes, very briefly.

The Deputy Speaker: No.

The House adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

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No. 10

Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Wednesday, May 13, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, May 13, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr. Mitchell: During the past year, I have raised a number of environmental issues that are occurring in the Ottawa-Carleton region, about which the Ministry of the Environment apparently shares no concern whatsoever. The most recent one, which I raised in the ministry offices and to this day have received no response or any acknowledgement about, concerns a proposal by an operation known as Sanitech-Lamarche to begin trucking waste from the Outaouais regional community and the regional municipality of Ottawa-Carleton to Bristol Mines, Quebec. The difficult part of this is that although they say they propose to filter the leachate, they intend to pump the leachate out into the middle of the Ottawa River.

I have raised this issue with staff in the minister's office. They acknowledged it could be a problem and agreed to get back to me. I have heard nothing about it. Is this typical of the answers given by the local Ottawa office? When they dealt with the oil spill of the National Capital Commission, they said, "It is none of our concern." This is a boundary river. They are going to pump leachate out into the middle of the Ottawa River where Ottawa and the region get their drinking water.

I suggest the Ministry of the Environment is showing very little or token responsibility to the Ottawa-Carleton area. I request an immediate response to this. I wish to know the ministry's involvement and to know it is on top of it.

MEMORIAL CUP

Mr. Breagh: I know members want to be kept informed on the Memorial Cup playdowns, and they will all be happy that a good plan is coming together. Oshawa will be in the finals on Saturday afternoon representing the Ontario Junior Hockey League.

I think it is worth reporting too that last night I watched 60 minutes of about the finest hockey I

have ever seen—and there were no fights at all—in a hockey game at the Civic Auditorium.

I want to give members the opportunity, because I know they will want to join me, to congratulate those who have put together such a fine hockey team. John Humphries is the owner. The only mistake I can think of that he has made recently is that he occasionally associates with the wrong political party, but we forgive him these days. The manager, Sherry Bassin, has certainly put together a collection of very fine young hockey players. The coach, Paul Theriault, has really got them working well. We have what I think will be a very fine Memorial Cup final this Saturday afternoon.

The other two teams are still playing off. Oshawa, of course, has beaten both of them in the series so far, so they are in a two-game total goal playoff to see who gets to play the Oshawa Generals. The Hulkster was right: If you work out every day, if you take your vitamins every day and if you say your prayers every day, it is all coming together for Saturday afternoon.

Finally, if I am a little late Monday it is only because I hate to leave a good party early, and there will be a good party on Saturday.

LESZEK MOCZULSKI

Mr. Newman: I rise to bring to the members' attention the visit to Toronto of Leszek Moczulski. Mr. Moczulski is the chairman of the Confederacy of Independent Poland, known as the KPN.

The KPN was formed on September 1, 1979, in Warsaw, Poland, in opposition to the Communist government. KPN was one of the main opposition forces which largely influenced the formation of Solidarity.

Mr. Moczulski was imprisoned three weeks after the creation of Solidarity and spent almost six years in prison in Poland. He was released, thanks to western protests, on September 13, 1986. Following his release from Poland, Mr. Moczulski left Poland for medical treatment in Britain. He has subsequently travelled to the United States for further medical care.

Leszek Moczulski is in Canada to share his experiences and views about present-day Poland.

I ask the members to join with me in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Moczulski.

PREMIER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Harris: In this House yesterday, we expressed our anger with the Premier (Mr. Peterson) concerning comments regarding former Premier William Davis. We see it as another example of the kind of man the Premier is.

What kind of man is he? He is the kind of man who, at a dinner function, makes a degrading remark about the mentally handicapped of this province.

What kind of man is he? He is the kind of man who, when asked about a tough nomination fight, says, "It is inevitable when people of different ethnic backgrounds run against each other."

What kind of man is he? He is the kind of man who will call a senior member of the press gallery senile, the kind of man who will suggest people take an airsickness bag along with them if there are not roadside toilets and the kind of man who will call a member of this Legislature who has close ties to the eastern European community, Ivan the Terrible. He is the kind of man who considers it beneath him to stand in line at the London airport on a Friday night.

Without his writers, without his coaches, without his tutors and without his advisers relocated from Ottawa, this is the kind of man he is. I ask members to contrast that with the man whose reputation he besmirched only two days ago. What a contrast to the standards that Ontarians deserve.

HOSPITAL FUNDING

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Late in April, the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) announced \$51.9 million for St. Joseph's Hospital in Guelph. At the same time, Guelph General Hospital will receive \$6.7 million for minor renovations.

The decision by the minister comes after years of discussion which was to lead to rationalization. Rationalization plans fell apart because of the therapeutic abortion issue. The minister says the maintenance of two acute care hospitals in Guelph will not be a precedent for many other communities that are considering rationalization. The reality is that this is very much a precedent that all communities are watching very closely.

The message from the Minister of Health out of this decision is that rationalization of health care services in Ontario is not a top priority. Guelph was very much a divided community, and what was needed was leadership from the

Minister of Health. However, the Minister of Health and the local member failed to provide the leadership.

What we require in this province is a new approach to amalgamation of hospitals and rationalization. We need to develop a health care and hospital system in this province that makes boards of hospitals more accountable to the communities. In my view, that means hospital boards should be elected by the public.

1340

SKYDOME

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I rise in some sorrow concerning the name of the new Toronto domed stadium. Members are aware that the federal government is currently negotiating a free trade agreement with the United States. Next to investment, the most important issue to the Americans in this negotiation is what they call "intellectual property," which basically means they do not want us stealing any of their ideas, which of course they consider to be the best in the world. This in turn means that if such an agreement is signed, no doubt the famous Toronto SkyDome will have to bow to the J. Lawrence Walkup Skydome at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff.

I see this as a vivid example of a problem of an uneven playing field, and I ask why it is that if Americans are potentially irritating Canadians, such as in the case of countervail on softwood lumber, we are told to knuckle under and negotiate an agreement so it will not happen in the future; but if Canadians are potentially irritating Americans, such as considering the possible abortion of the Dome Petroleum sale to Amoco, they are not told to knuckle under and negotiate an agreement so it will not happen in the future, but rather we are told to lay low so as not to upset the volatile US Congress. Some level playing field.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Cousens: I spent the morning picking up letters from people in south York region, and I am presenting them now to the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to read as an example of the problems we are having in south York region.

George Crothers probably said it best of all: "It is almost 25 years since we first acquired property here in Vaughan, and although there has been a lot of industry fill in the farm land, nothing much has happened to the road system. We really have outgrown the sheep and goats that wandered

around here in 1961. The same holds true for the highway."

Mr. Speaker: That completes the allotted time for members' statements.

LESZEK MOCZULSKI

Mr. Shymko: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I understand there had been agreement of all three House leaders that we would be allowed to comment, following the remarks of the member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. Newman), prior to ministerial statements, on the presence today of Leszek Moczulski.

Mr. Speaker: That may be a point of order. There certainly has been no mention made of it in the House.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could have the agreement of the House to allow all three parties a couple of moments to comment before ministerial statements.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed? For up to two minutes?

Agreed to.

Mr. Shymko: On behalf of all my colleagues in Her Majesty's official opposition, I am honoured and privileged to welcome a very distinguished fighter for liberty and democracy, not only for his persecuted Polish nation but also for all freedom-loving peoples of the world, Leszek Moczulski, recently released from a Polish prison after almost seven years of incarceration, since 1980.

Mr. Moczulski is the founder and chairman of the Confederacy of Independent Poland, the first political opposition party which was formed after the Second World War by a declaration on September 1, 1979, in Warsaw.

This year marks the 40th tragic anniversary of the total destruction and crushing of all political opposition by the Soviet occupation forces and its puppet regime, the Communist regime, which rules to the present day, set up in 1947.

Because this act by Mr. Moczulski and his colleagues constituted the first open political opposition to the Communist regime, Mr. Moczulski was arrested on September 23, 1980, three weeks after the creation of Solidarity, and sentenced to a seven-year prison term.

His party, the KPN, considers the Communist regime in Poland as illegitimate. It is the main political opposition force which largely influenced and continues to influence Solidarity. Following his arrest, countless other leaders of his party were sentenced to long prison terms. Because of constant persecution, torture and

harassment, he suffered three heart attacks in prison and was denied medical treatment at all times.

Fearing his death a few months ago, the present government released him in late 1986. So we welcome him and Mrs. Moczulski, accompanied today by Stan Orlowski, the national president of the Canadian Polish Congress; George Burski, the national vice-president of the Canadian Polish Congress; and Stan Sadowski, the president of the Toronto branch of the Canadian Polish Congress. Could they please all stand so that we, as members of the Legislature, may greet them.

Mr. Speaker, with your permission and that of the House—it is very rare—I will say a few words in Polish, his native language, if I may just conclude with a sentence. Your permission and that of my honourable colleagues has been granted occasionally.

Mr. Speaker: Is there permission?

Agreed to.

Mr. Shymko: [Remarks in Polish]

Mr. Speaker: Because there have been many requests by the member who has just spoken that such words be printed in Hansard, I think it only fair that I inform the House they will not be printed in Hansard.

Mr. Rae: I appreciate the opportunity to speak to this occasion and, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, want to welcome Mr. Moczulski to this assembly. I think it fair to say that the assembly here will form a rather striking contrast to the political life that exists today and has existed for many years in Poland. I must say it is a source of pride to us to be able to welcome Mr. Moczulski here. We are a province which believes strongly in freedom, the principle of free trade unions, the principle of political freedom and economic freedom, a freedom which for too long has been impossible in Poland and which has been systematically repressed and oppressed by the one-party system which exists in that country.

1350

I want to welcome Mr. Moczulski here on behalf of my colleagues, members of the New Democratic Party. We have, from the earliest days of our party, been involved directly in so many ways in the life of Poland. I think of the fact that one of the leaders of our national party was born in Poland. His family came here in order to find freedom some 80 years ago, and I think it is worth recalling the number of great members of all political parties who have been so proud of

their Polish heritage, so proud of their roots in that part of the world that has known freedom for so little time.

It is with great pride that I take part in this occasion and welcome Mr. Moczulski here.

In response to the remarks by the member for High Park-Swansea (Mr. Shymko), the last sentence that he read into the record was one of the few statements he has made in the House that all of us on this side have been able to agree with 100 per cent.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

FACILITIES FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I wish to give this House today details of a new and more enlightened system for delivering secure custody and detention services to Ontario's young offenders who commit offences between the ages of 12 and 15.

The Young Offenders Act and the Child and Family Services Act set out three main principles: first, the right of society to be protected from the illegal behaviour of young persons; second, the need for those young persons to be accountable for their actions; third, the rights and needs of the young people themselves.

Those needs include retaining close family ties and living near home, and the benefits of supportive counselling and community activities that can result, in most cases, in these youngsters leading productive and useful lives.

As the recent speech from the throne indicated, the government will ensure that "programs and services will be made available on a decentralized basis, close at hand and easy to find."

That is the foundation and the background for our new direction on young offenders.

In the past, secure custody for young offenders in the ministry's care has been provided mainly by training schools, many of them at a considerable distance from the offender's home and community.

Three of my ministry's training schools, Sprucedale in Simcoe, Brookside in Cobourg and Cecil Facer in Sudbury, were transferred on April 1 to the Ministry of Correctional Services. These schools provided a total of 212 spaces that will no longer be available to my ministry's young offender clients.

We plan to replace these schools by developing a network of smaller and more numerous secure custody facilities. These will be located in the north, southeast and southwest of the province. Some of these facilities will be new; other facilities will be renovated or upgraded.

The province has allotted capital grants of \$16.6 million for these new accommodations.

We expect the number of secure spaces to fall from the present 415 to approximately 286, a number that reflects the 20 per cent decline in secure care requirements for 12-year-olds to 15-year-olds since the Young Offenders Act came into effect.

Including existing facilities, there will be 17 smaller secure custody and detention facilities. Of these, 12 will each have 20 or fewer spaces. My ministry will provide four facilities that can accommodate between 22 and 30 young offenders, and we will retain the Syl Apps facility in Oakville with 42 spaces.

The use of small, scattered facilities will improve the emotional and social wellbeing of the young offenders, who will have regular access to their families. Specialized programs, requiring community-based services, will be made available.

Also, there can be maximum interaction between the offender and the community, individually monitored, which augurs well for the young person's future rehabilitation and reacceptance into the community—surely the ultimate goal of everyone's efforts.

As a further part of this more personal and individual network system of custody and support, I am also announcing today two pilot projects of community support services. A \$1.8-million project will be based in northern Ontario and a \$1.2-million project will be based in southeastern Ontario. We hope to introduce similar services throughout the whole province based on the experience gained from these initial projects.

Because the new networks will offer fewer spaces than our previous and more rigid system, we need to establish intensive community support services as an essential part of our province's youth justice system. These services will include functions such as assessment, bail supervision, crisis intervention, life skills counselling, drug and alcohol counselling and training for agencies. The services will reflect local needs.

Details of the timing, location and acquisition of suitable premises are being worked out with our partners in the various communities.

I am confident that agreements will be reached as quickly as possible, so that we may shortly begin to offer these sensitive and supportive services to troubled youngsters in Ontario.

TRESPASSING

Hon. Mr. Scott: I am pleased to present to the assembly the report of the Task Force on the Law

concerning Trespass to Publicly Used Property as it Affects Youth and Minorities, which was prepared for us by a task force chaired by Raj Anand of Toronto.

In this clear and forceful report, copies of which will be made available to members of the assembly, Mr. Anand has reviewed the use of the Trespass to Property Act to regulate entry and activities on publicly used property, particularly the common areas of shopping malls and plazas. He has found that the ways in which the act is used have caused serious, although generally unintended, discrimination against youth and minorities.

Mr. Anand finds that the absolute discretion given to the occupiers of publicly used property under the act is out of step with current public perceptions. That perception, which is fostered by owner groups, is that common areas of many malls are the modern equivalent of the city square, in which people enter freely, walk around and converse with others.

Providing facilities for casual recreation of this type is a major function these days of urban and town planning. Shopping mall owners have willingly, and for good commercial reasons in many instances, taken over the role of providing the town or city square in their community. In many areas, the malls are the only places for people to get together casually. Therefore, among other things, Mr. Anand recommends that the trespass law, as it applies to shopping malls and other publicly used property, be amended to reflect the public nature of these common areas during the hours they are open to the public.

The report sets out two main approaches that could be taken to discourage and prevent the discriminatory enforcement of trespass laws against, for example, youth and minorities. First, owners of such premises could be required to have cause before ejecting someone or charging him with trespassing. The reasonableness of that cause would be subject in the ordinary way to review by the courts. Alternatively, the quasi-public nature of some malls could be recognized by eliminating the application of the law of trespass to them, leaving the Criminal Code and other laws of general application to protect order.

My ministry looks forward to receiving extensive public comment and comment from the other political parties on this report and will be evaluating the benefits of the report's proposal in the light of that comment.

Pending the receipt of public comment and decisions on government action, I would like to

highlight one of Mr. Anand's findings. He discovered that most mall owners intend to exercise the Trespass to Property Act in a nondiscriminatory way; however, that intention frequently fails to be transmitted through the chain of command to those responsible for maintaining order in the mall itself. Indeed, contradictory messages may be received by security guards and others involved in enforcing the act. This problem can be remedied if mall owners take steps to convey clear instructions, with written guidelines, to their front-line staff.

Mr. Anand has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of the proper application of trespass legislation in this generation. I congratulate him on his thorough analysis and well-thought-out proposals, which I hope will be the subject of widespread debate and extensive comment.

Mr. Anand is in the gallery. I ask him to stand so that he can be welcomed and thanked by the assembly.

1400

Mr. Speaker: Are there any other ministerial statements? The Minister of Transportation and Communications.

Mr. Sargent: It is nice to have the minister back.

Hon. Mr. Fulton: It is nice to be back. As my colleague the member for York North (Mr. Sorbara) said, "It is all downhill from here."

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Hon. Mr. Fulton: In the past year, this government has undertaken extensive consultation with municipalities in the greater Toronto area and throughout the province in an effort to better co-ordinate provincial investment in our road and transit network.

Discussions with the greater Toronto area municipalities of York, Durham, Peel and Metropolitan Toronto were prompted by a number of factors. A large backlog of unmet needs, pressures in high-growth areas and a wide range of high-cost, long-term proposals compelled us to look at transportation in the GTA from a broad regional perspective for the first time in many years.

Many in this House will already be aware of some of the longer-term proposals put forth by the regions and the province. They include, among others: the Network 2011 proposal, including the Sheppard Avenue subway line, the Mississauga busway, Highway 407 and the Front Street extension in Metro. It goes without saying that all of these projects entail significant

financial commitments from the province stretching over many years. The Network 2011 project alone, for instance, would cost more than \$2.8 billion.

The mandate of the provincial government obliges us to ensure that these and other projects fit into a workable, fair and efficient transportation network for the greater Toronto area. The system must provide for the movement of both people and goods. It must respond to and encourage the economic development of the entire region. In achieving this, this province must ensure a fair distribution of provincial transportation dollars among all affected regions.

Our consultations established agreement on the need to protect the investment already made in our transportation network through proper maintenance and rehabilitation, to obtain maximum use of these systems and to invest in those transportation facilities needed for the economic development of the greater Toronto area.

As a result, we are moving ahead with a major new transportation investment strategy supporting this economic growth. An additional \$130 million in new dollars will be spent in the greater Toronto area over the next three years.

The municipalities have identified several projects requiring urgent attention. Among those are the Front Street extension in Metro, Eglinton Avenue widening in Peel, 16th Avenue in York, the Steeles-Tauton Road connection in Durham and a number of other proposals. This funding will allow municipalities to proceed with their priority projects. We will begin working closely with the municipalities immediately to finalize an implementation strategy addressing the renewal of existing systems and the addition of vital new provincial and municipal projects.

Metropolitan Toronto has one of the finest public transportation systems in North America and we must build on this success in planning for the future. At the same time, population and employment patterns are changing. Future planning must respond to these changes and must do so from a truly regional perspective.

In the course of our discussions, it became clear that transit planning for Metro cannot be viewed in isolation from transportation issues in the greater Toronto area. Many of the planning issues which must be faced go beyond the purview of the Network 2011 study. As a government, we believe all these proposals require further examination.

There are many examples, including fare integration and better service co-ordination of Toronto Transit Commission and GO Transit

services, so that transit users can more easily move between these systems.

There is also an opportunity for greater use of existing rail lines through high-congestion areas, particularly in the northwestern and northeastern areas of Metropolitan Toronto.

Municipal planners from all regions agreed that there is strong potential to develop a system of gateways. Gateways will bring together all modes of transportation to allow people to move from cars to buses or from buses to higher-speed transit. These gateways will better co-ordinate transportation services and reduce congestion in and around Metropolitan Toronto.

These consultations also clearly outlined that transportation requirements for the disabled demand immediate attention.

Consequently, our next step will be to initiate a joint review of Network 2011 with the affected municipalities and operators in the greater Toronto area. The review will consider new opportunities identified through our consultations as well as lower-cost options and alternative technologies to meet the varied transportation needs.

I expect this review will be concluded by the end of this year. The results will provide us with sound direction for future transit investments so critical to the continued success of the greater Toronto area and the entire provincial economy.

We also recognize the need for new, improved and better-maintained transportation facilities throughout all of Ontario. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) shares this awareness, and major new funding commitments will be further outlined shortly.

FOREST FIRES

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: One week ago I stood here and told the House about the serious forest fire situation in northern Ontario. Unfortunately, I have to tell the members that the continuing good weather means the fire hazard is now extreme. Yesterday, 38 new fires started in the province. There are 87 fires now burning, covering 13,000 hectares. Of those, 22 are out of control and seven of them are major.

Because of the very dry conditions and the serious fire hazard over large parts of Ontario, I announced this morning that my ministry is imposing a total ban on all open fires throughout the province's forest fire regions. That ban includes all of northern Ontario. It also includes such holiday areas as Algonquin Park, the Bruce Peninsula, the Muskoka, Haliburton and Tweed areas and northern Lanark county. The fire

restrictions begin at midnight tonight and will extend until at least May 31.

In effect, this ban means absolutely no open fires are allowed. It means all permits for burning debris are suspended and it also means people should not be using fire to destroy clusters of insects such as forest tent caterpillars. Unfortunately, despite the upcoming holiday weekend, fireworks are not permitted.

I would stress that we have not imposed travel restrictions. People who planned to go north for the weekend do not have to stay home. They can still have barbecues. They can still cook meals on portable stoves or on charcoal burners. The difference is that these fires are well-contained.

My ministry is making every effort to inform the public of these important fire restrictions. People who are not sure whether their area is included should contact any Ministry of Natural Resources office for information. I cannot emphasize enough how important it is that these restrictions be followed.

I received a message this morning from the Ontario Forest Industries Association calling the restricted fire zone a wise move and giving us its full support.

1410

Ontario has about 750 people actively committed to fire duties and 800 more on standby, in reserve for initial attack operations or assisting in some other capacity. Our air fleet includes some 65 helicopters and 14 heavy water bombers.

I was in northwestern Ontario and met with firefighters last Friday at one of the base camps. At that time, I congratulated them on their efforts and I would like to do that again today. I want to assure this House that every effort is being made to contain these fires. We are doing our best, but nature can be a ferocious opponent. We are asking for the co-operation of the public in helping us to protect public safety, private property and our valuable resources.

Mr. Speaker: I gather the minister has a statement. Is it longer than 45 seconds?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: Perhaps I can ask for unanimous consent to furnish a very brief statement.

Agreed to.

FIRE AT CONSTRUCTION SITE

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am sure all members of this House are aware of the devastating fire that destroyed more than 100 unfinished homes in a Markham subdivision yesterday. I would like to express our sincere sympathy to the purchasers

involved, who through no fault of their own may be put to inconvenience. I want to assure the House that steps are being taken to set up a meeting with the builder, Canada Homes, with a view to getting information out to the home owners as quickly as possible on the builder's plans for reconstruction.

I remind the members that if the builder is unable to complete the project, buyer deposits up to \$20,000 are fully covered by the Ontario New Home Warranty Program. I am also informed that the Ontario fire marshal's office is investigating the incident and the reported water supply problems at the construction site. I add that the fire marshal is today directing all fire departments in Ontario to inspect local residential construction sites to check for violations under the Fire Marshals Act. The fire marshal will also be convening a meeting with the Toronto Home Builders' Association and the Ministry of Housing to co-ordinate fire prevention measures and to review safety programs and initiatives.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs will also be working closely with the town of Markham to provide any assistance that may be needed in the town's own investigation of yesterday's events.

RESPONSES

FACILITIES FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. O'Connor: Might I just say to the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) that while decentralization of secure facilities—jails, in other words—for young offenders is a good, albeit expensive, step to be taking for young offenders, the government continues to miss the boat with young offenders.

It has failed again to take the opportunity to get in step with the rest of the country by its failure to adopt an alternative measures program. The system of alternative measures, which is provided for in the federal Young Offenders Act and which has been adopted by every other province in the country except Ontario, offers a less severe method of dealing with children and young offenders by redirecting them out of the court system, by relieving them of the requirement to attend before a court to plead guilty and be stigmatized with a criminal record and by allowing them to admit their guilt and to receive counselling and training in methods other than the strict court system.

The government has missed that boat. I do not know why. We have been urging it for some considerable time to consider what the rest of the country has adopted. Perhaps in due course the

minister can tell us why, and when the government will get in step with the rest of the country.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Gregory: May I begin by being very genuine in welcoming the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) back from his illness and I hope he continues in good health.

Having said that, I think the minister might well have taken another few weeks for his convalescence because what he said today has determined that nothing is happening today. He made a statement about an additional \$130 million in new money over three years, or \$40 million a year, none of which is really new money. A lot of it has already been announced.

The member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) has already announced to the press the \$1.5 million for widening Eglinton Avenue in Mississauga, without the benefit of even notifying the mayor or anybody else. What the minister has said today is that he has made no decision or his staff has made no decision on doing anything, but he is proposing a joint review. That is study 365 for the Liberal government. It means there is absolutely no decision on Highway 407, the Sheppard subway or the Mississauga busway. There has been no decision whatsoever except a review that possibly is going to end before the end of the year; I suppose it will be after the next election is over and he will not have to worry about it, so he has actually said nothing.

However, he says there will be major new financial commitments made in due course. That means to me that as the election goes along day by day, perhaps there will be major new commitments moneywise. He certainly has the money and no reason not to announce it today. Why can he not just come out and say, "We will go with Highway 407 now"?

FIRE AT CONSTRUCTION SITE

Mr. Cousens: I know that with that minister back we will get Highway 407 far more quickly than if he is on a sickbed, so I say to him, get well and get it for us.

The Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) might as well take a leave of absence. The Toronto Home Builders' Association has asked for some kind of review of fire regulations, and nothing has been done by this government. Perhaps there could be some kind of firebreak as a built-in standard in these new subdivisions, say between every six houses,

because they had to bulldoze new homes yesterday to keep the fire from spreading.

The other thing is that we are dealing with a very reputable builder with Canada Homes. They go out of their way to try to solve problems for their buyers.

I had a fire in my riding on Saturday where 10 homes went up in smoke. There have been fires in Etobicoke. There have been fires in Vaughan. What are we going to do to protect the new home buyers, who can be faced with additional costs when they go to buy their homes because of the changes that take place? What about the additional time that is going to be spent to build their homes?

I do not think the government has begun to address the problems of the new home industry. We have responsible builders who will do their best, but what is the minister doing? I think he is irresponsible in just coming along and having a statement here that says, "Oh, we have sincere sympathy."

Do something more than have sympathy. We want action. We want to have action that is going to start saying we are going to have fire rules, we are going to have some new regulations, we are going to implement them all the time.

Here the minister is saying, "Oh well, we are going to send the fire marshals out to look around." Is that not done all the time?

Come on; let us get on with it. We have a responsibility to see the citizens of Ontario served, not just talked to all the time.

FACILITIES FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I rise to respond to the announcement by the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) today in terms of a further attempt to reduce the number of large institutions for young offenders, which of course we welcome, but I want to draw to the attention of the House that it is basically a papering over of a very fundamental problem we have in Ontario with young offenders. It is good that the great civil libertarian, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), the chief law officer, and the Premier (Mr. Peterson) are here to hear this.

Although it is true that there is an attempt in the Ministry of Community and Social Services to deal with the under-15s in a more humane fashion, we have two ministries in this province that deal with young offenders. Although the federal Young Offenders Act wanted to make sure all young offenders were dealt with in the same way, in this province they are dealt with

dramatically differently. In the courts they are sentenced differently.

This minister gets up and says there is a 20 per cent decline in the numbers of kids who are sent into secure custody. That is true for the under-15s, but why do we not hear today about what the situation is for the 16- to 18-year-olds? It is up significantly in this province.

What is the minister doing? He is basically transferring his remaining training schools that were not transferred before over to this minister to incarcerate 16- to 18-year-olds when he deinstitutionalizes the 15-year-olds and under. That is what is going on here, while we have the great civil libertarian, the Attorney General here, presiding as our chief law officer over our totally inconsistent system of justice to young kids in this province.

In the Ministry of Correctional Services there is even an attempt to bring for-profit services into the care of young juvenile offenders.

I say to the minister that if this government were serious about justice for young kids, there would have been a co-ordinated statement brought in today that the responsibility for those kids would be taken away from the Minister of Correctional Services (Mr. Keyes) and given solely to the Ministry of Community and Social Services, so that we have one consistent means of dealing with young offenders in Ontario.

1420

FOREST FIRES

Mr. Wildman: Briefly, I want to say that we in northern Ontario are happy to hear the comments of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) with regard to the grave fire hazard we are facing. We want to congratulate the officials and the personnel of the ministry who are on guard and fighting those fires, across the northwest particularly but also in the northeast. We are pleased that there is the co-operation of the forest industry and of the bûcherons, the cutters and the skidders in the bush who are in fact on guard as well and working to try to deal with the fire hazard.

We hope that the weather will change and that we will have a lot of rain on this long weekend. In the meantime, we appreciate the efforts of the ministry.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Reville: It is good to see the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton). Welcome back, minister; there is lots to do.

On behalf of the member for Lake Nipigon (Mr. Pouliot), I would like to say it is not a question of paving just the shoulders in that part of the country; it is the space in between the shoulders that needs attention. This talks about the mess in Toronto that has been caused by the foolishness of Mayor Eggleton and the pro-development council there, but there are ministries across here that have abdicated their responsibilities for planning in the Metro region while the Premier (Mr. Peterson) talks a lot of foolish guff about waterfront czars.

We need to do some serious work on transportation planning in Metro. I regret to say that \$130 million is a tiny drop in a very big bucket. Let us get on with real transportation planning.

FIRE AT CONSTRUCTION SITE

Mr. Swart: I want to say to the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) that the measures he has announced today relative to the massive fire in Markham are appropriate, but I guess it is reasonable to ask why the action that he proposes now was not taken previously. Markham had two serious fires immediately preceding this one. What was done then by his ministry? Obviously nothing, or he would have announced it.

The minister must know that new housing construction, given the dry wood content, the work being carried out and the proximity of the houses one to another, is extremely fire-prone. This latest multimillion-dollar fire is a reflection of the inadequacy of the previous action on the part of the fire marshal, a department of his ministry.

RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. O'Connor: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: Today I received a letter, I presume in my capacity as chairman of the select committee on retail store hours, from Timothy S. B. Danson, counsel to Paul Magder. If I may read one paragraph to the House, the letter said in part:

"I can only say this: your report must not be released until the decision in our case is released, likely June. Any attempt to indirectly influence the judicial decision will be dealt with accordingly."

I ask that you investigate whether that statement, and other statements in the letter, might possibly constitute a breach of my privileges, the privileges of the members of the select committee on retail store hours and,

indeed, the privileges of all the members of this House.

For that purpose, I am prepared to table a copy of this letter and ask that the investigation be undertaken and referred, possibly, to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the member for drawing it to my attention. I feel it would only be responsible for me, because it is up to me to decide whether it is a *prima facie* case of privilege, to ask that the House allow me to reserve on this, and I hope to report to the House tomorrow.

MEDIA REPORT

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: May I attempt to correct the record. This morning the *Globe and Mail* referred to the Treasurer of Ontario as Richard Nixon.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The member has a point to make. I hope we are allowed to hear him.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As the honourable members know, Richard Nixon said, "I am not a crook," so it could not possibly have been him. I want to make that perfectly clear.

Mr. Reville: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I am sure the House would like to give its condolences to the government House leader. It seems he has an easier time passing 50-pound notes than legislation.

Mr. Speaker: I am glad all members have read the press today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Premier. We discovered yesterday, after several calls to the Ministry of Education, that the government has decided in the capital allocations to give the public schools 15 per cent of the ministry-approved expenditure needs and the separate schools 29 per cent. I wonder if the Premier could explain to the public how we can draw any other conclusion but that he has chosen to provide capital to the separate schools at the expense of the public school system?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer that to the Minister of Education.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understand it has been referred to the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Quite frankly, I share some of the observations that are attaching to the

response given to the question by the Leader of the the Opposition, but I do appreciate again the opportunity today to address this question.

Let me just use one statistic. Of the \$226.4 million announced recently by this government for capital purposes, some \$97 million was made available to the public schools alone. That \$97 million is almost \$25 million more than this man gave to the entire system two and a half years ago.

Mr. Grossman: Perhaps the minister would like to address the question we have been asking now for two days without an answer. Let us put it another way. The \$97 million that the minister boasts so strongly of amounts to 15 per cent of the approved expenditures, amounting to \$630 million, which his ministry has acknowledged as educationally necessary, needed by the public schools boards. So, out of \$630 million acknowledged by his ministry to be needed by the public schools, he gave \$97 million or 15 per cent.

Given the fact that we have only today been able to pry from his ministry the information that \$57.4 million is on account of Bill 30, my simple question to the minister is, had Bill 30 not been passed, would he have turned that \$57 million back to the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and still have given the public schools only \$97 million?

Hon. Mr. Conway: It was once written that politics is the most noble of the arts and the most soiled of professions. There is no nobility in this kind of questioning.

The Leader of the Opposition is confusing board requests with ministry approvals. I want to say as well that we have offered some \$250 million to the schools of this province. It is true that as we make that capital allocation, we take into account such things as enrolment growth and pressure. By and large, there has been much greater enrolment growth in a number of the separate boards, particularly at the elementary level. All the Leader of the Opposition has to do is to talk to the member for York Centre (Mr. Cousens), for example, or he might want to talk to the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), who quite rightly points out to me the concerns of his separate school community which have not been addressed in this allocation.

I am proud to stand on the record we have constructed in this connection. It is true we have not solved all the problems, but our response to the needs of the public school community is vastly greater and better than anything the Leader of the Opposition ever did as either minister or Treasurer.

1430

Mr. Grossman: All the minister's partisan rhetoric is not going to allow him to escape from answering this question. We are going to continue to put it until we get an answer.

Just to get the minister's facts right, we have not confused board requests with ministry-approved, needed expenditures. These are figures we got from the capital grants architectural services section of his ministry, from Theo Grootenboer, who gave us these figures with regard to the ministry-approved, needed expenditures by the two boards: public, \$630 million, of which the ministry gave \$97 million; separate \$440 million—less—of which the ministry gave \$129 million, which is more.

Had Bill 30 not been passed, would the minister still have given the public school boards only 15 per cent of what his ministry says they need? Yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Conway: Bill 30 was passed because this government, unlike that Leader of the Opposition, had the guts to proceed with it. Unlike his most unheroic questioning, I am not for a moment ashamed of what this government, under the leadership of this Premier (Mr. Peterson), has done in this connection.

Let me say to this Leader of the Opposition, who is learning well his new role, that we have a capital allocation process that takes into account a number of factors. I mentioned earlier that enrolment growth is one of the main determinants in terms of who gets what. I mentioned also the rate of grant. The reality is that the separate boards have a higher rate of grant because they do not have access to as large a share of the industrial and commercial assessment. It is no surprise that when one takes into account enrolment growth and rate of grant, the separate community would receive slightly more in this connection.

I repeat that \$97 million to the public school community is about \$25 million more than this Leader of the Opposition gave the whole school community but two and a half years ago.

Mr. Grossman: The minister seems unusually perturbed by having to answer some of these questions.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: We know what you are trying to do.

Mr. Grossman: I am just trying to get the minister to answer a question, which he refuses to do.

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. Grossman: My question is of the Premier once again. The Premier will know that last

evening Metropolitan council released some information with regard to assessments in Metropolitan Toronto, which his government was covering up and refusing to release to the people of Metropolitan Toronto.

Interjection.

Mr. Grossman: He had every opportunity to do so. We invited him to release it and he refused.

Will the Premier be kind enough today to instruct the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) to release all the background data which will indicate which of the 83,095 people in Metropolitan Toronto will have their property taxes go up, so they can make their own judgements as to whether market value assessment will proceed? Will he release the information today?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I will refer this to the Treasurer.

Mr. Speaker: It is referred to the Minister of Revenue.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I think the Leader of the Opposition is aware that Metro council requested the impact study so that the figures would be upgraded to 1984 statistics. This was prepared for the task force that was considering this matter. In response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition's colleague the member for Eglinton (Mr. McFadden), I believe I said earlier this week that it would be sent soon to the Metropolitan government.

It was presented to them last night. It was not covered up. It was sent as soon as it was available, with the understanding that it is their report and that they have made it public. That is an appropriate way to proceed. It is totally democratic and fair to all concerned.

Mr. Grossman: I want to remind the Minister of Revenue that when he was in opposition he took great delight in pointing out to the government that property tax assessment had been taken over by the government of Ontario and was totally the responsibility of the Ministry of Revenue, which he now heads. This information is the sole and total property of the Ministry of Revenue. The minister has every authority to give out this information. Candidly, he has refused to give out this information because he is afraid to give it out.

The minister has the information in his ministry which indicates 83,095 people in the city of Toronto will have their property taxes go up if market value assessment is implemented. Those people are entitled to know who they are and how much their taxes will go up. In the name

of open government with no walls or barriers, will he stop covering up these data and release them to the 83,000 people today?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Let me assure the member that no information is being covered up. The report was prepared at the request of the metropolitan council. It has been delivered to them and they have made it public. That is exactly the way the process should proceed.

When the Leader of the Opposition compares the policy now with what it was before, he should recall it was his government that covered up the reports. When I became the minister, I made those reports public. The honourable member would certainly know that. The information has been given to the municipal council which is responsible for it.

Mr. Grossman: I am not sure what point the Minister of Revenue is making. The statement he has made comparing the practices is not factually accurate. He has followed a process of handing this material over to the municipalities, which was always the agreed-upon process.

I will tell him this from my time in government: over here, we all know that his ministry has the house-by-house breakdown of the 83,000 homes whose taxes will go up and by how much, and of the 64,000 homes whose taxes will go down. We know that is in his ministry. He has not shipped that anywhere and he has not made that public.

The people in this city are entitled to know whether they are part of the 64,000 people whose taxes will go down or the 83,000 whose taxes will go up. The only reason they do not have that information is that the minister is covering it up and does not want to face the music of telling them the information they are entitled to. He should hand over the information now.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I do not know whether there was a question there or just another tirade, but I can assure the member that the information I have put before the House in response to the question is correct.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: With respect, would all members allow other members to ask questions?

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. It is about cancer. The minister will know that he was responsible for suppressing for several years a report that documented the extent of the undercompensation of occupational

disease—in particular, occupational cancer—in Ontario.

This report, which is known by the name of its author as the Yassi report, which I have here in my hand, was relied upon heavily by Professor Paul Weiler in the work he did for both the Liberal and Tory governments. On page 156 of this document, it states: "Only 3.3 per cent of the estimated number of occupational lung cancer deaths in Ontario are currently being compensated. The data indicate that only 13.5 per cent are even reported." That is the Yassi report, which categorizes the extent of the problem and the extent of undercompensation.

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In response to that problem with respect to mining, there is now a panel which has come up with a set of criteria so bizarre and so inadequate that it is quite possible the only people who could qualify under the criteria established are dead. It is quite possible that under the scheme that has been established by the panel, set up by the ministry and set up by the Workers' Compensation Board, the only people who can qualify are dead.

How can the minister accept a situation where we are now into a brave new world of setting standards for application for pension for occupational disease which will continue to ignore 95 per cent to 97 per cent of the people who deserve to get compensation from the government of Ontario for their occupational disease?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I find this whole line of questioning rather surprising. Apparently the honourable gentleman has not read section 86p of the Workers' Compensation Act, an act which was passed when he was a member of the Legislature, and he has been well aware of this matter for a very long time. The panel is now, in terms of the gold miners, simply following the procedures set out in section 86p. I refer the honourable gentleman to subsection 86p(7) of the act, which indicates the functions of the panel, including "to investigate possible industrial diseases," "to make findings" and "to advise the Workers' Compensation Board] on eligibility rules regarding compensation for claims respecting industrial diseases."

What follows after that in subsections 86p(10) and (11) of the act—and the honourable leader of the third party ought to know it—is a process by which those findings are published and comment is invited. That comment is now being heard. At the conclusion of that, the board of directors of the Workers' Compensation Board will receive a recommendation and will make judgements on

this matter. That is a new, independent process and yet the honourable member wants me to interfere with it.

Mr. Rae: The minister has not interfered in anything since he was appointed. He is the most pathetic substitute for a Minister of Labour anybody in this House has ever seen. That is the reality. I do not recall a minister ever abandoning responsibility for workers' compensation more categorically than the minister who represents the riding of Windsor-Sandwich in this House today. I cannot recall it.

What is the minister's response to a report which establishes a precedent which clearly states, in quite categorical terms, that the benefit of the doubt will not fall to the worker, that the benefit of the doubt will go entirely to the Workers' Compensation Board, because the criteria have been established in such a way that it is quite possible that any of the people who qualify are dead? That is the reality. What the hell kind of standard is it that the only people who qualify are dead? That is the question for the minister. Just what kind of standard is that?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I will ignore the continued cheap personal invective from the leader of the third party—the party of deep compassion—as far as I can.

We have set up a scientific panel headed by an eminent gentleman by the name of Dr. James Ham. We have a number of other eminent individuals, men and women, on the panel. It is a well-balanced panel. They have provided a report which I readily acknowledge was a report in which there was a division, there was a dissenting opinion. That report of the independent panel will now go to the Workers' Compensation Board and there is a process to judge that report. Indeed, the participation and the submissions of the public are invited. That is exactly what is contemplated by the act. It is exactly what was contemplated when this Legislature decided in this area to start taking politics out of workers' compensation. That is what the member wanted to do. Now that we have attempted to take politics out of workers' compensation, he is asking to put it right back in.

Mr. Martel: It says in a report prepared by Dr. Muller, "Both early start of underground work in Ontario gold mines and years of dust exposure in these mines prior to 1945 are associated with increased lung cancer risk." Now the weasel words, "Later exposure contributes only very little to risk," after 1945.

Can the minister tell me whether in fact all gold mines in Ontario after 1945 had mechanical

ventilation and secondary ventilation in them? Can the minister further tell me whether tests were conducted as late as 1953 in the gold mines where the test results were so high they could not be calculated? If those facts are correct, he had better throw out the Muller report and in addition the criteria that were established by that committee that in fact would like to dump Linda Jolley if it could get its way.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Obviously, my friend has an opinion about one of the eminent members of the committee. It is not an opinion that the Lieutenant Governor in Council shares. We appointed Ms. Jolley. We think that her contribution will be a positive one over the term of the council. There will be times when we will—

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) take his seat. Has the member cooled down?

CHILD CARE

Mr. Rae: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. It is about child care. It is about the question of where Ontario's money is going to go.

The minister will no doubt recall that roughly 16 years ago, this Legislature had to make a decision with respect to nursing home operations and the expansion of nursing home care in Ontario. He will no doubt be aware that in that year, 1971-72, nursing home subsidies cost the government of Ontario \$30 million. They now cost more than \$260 million, which is more than a 700 per cent increase compared to roughly a 350 per cent increase in terms of public expenditure generally in that time.

We are on the verge of as crucial a decision being made by the government of Ontario with respect to child care as was made with nursing home care 16 years ago. Given the experience of this province with quality of care, with financial accountability, with ability to deal with corporate concentration, with the incredible way in which cash flow has been used to expand operations, and with the way in which chains now have expanded in ways we predicted 16 years ago but which the government of the time refused to accept, can the minister tell us why, given the totality of that experience, it continues in the folly of proceeding with the funding of commercial child care in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: There is a significant difference in the two kinds of operations the leader refers to. First, in Ontario, 85 per cent of the privately run day care centres are run by small

independents. They are not run by chains in any way, shape or form. Second, I have said very clearly on a number of occasions that the funding that will flow to the private centres will flow only to those in existence now. It will not flow to any others that start up at a later date. All new initiative money and all incentives for further growth in the system will go only to the nonprofit centres, so I do not see the comparison the honourable member makes.

1450

Mr. Rae: Let me put it to the minister that if he were to do a survey of the structure of ownership of nursing homes in 1971, he would find a lot of very small operations. He would find a lot of very small operators that, faced with the brave new world of the Extendicares and the Bestviews, were swallowed up.

If he looks at the history of the last 16 years, that history has been one of cash flow guaranteed, which has extended the power of large corporations and has extended the power of chains at the expense of smaller proprietor-owned operations in the nursing home field. Precisely the same practices will prevail with respect to child care. He can bet his money on it. The only problem is that the money we are betting on it is ours, that of the taxpayers of Ontario. That is the problem.

Given the resistance of the commercial operators in the nursing home field to financial accountability, given the extent of expansion, consolidation and cash flow at the expense of service, how can the minister accept a situation where Ontario is going to be making precisely the same mistake in 1987 as it made in 1971?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Again, I do not buy the honourable member's conclusion. As I have indicated before in response to another member's question in the House, we have said very clearly that the flow of the additional funds will be for two purposes only: to increase the wages of the day care workers and to reduce the fees paid by parents. The only way those funds will flow is if the private operators are prepared to open their books so we can confirm that is what the money is being used for. Again, I do not think the comparison is apt.

Mr. Rae: It is all beginning to emerge bit by bit. It is interesting to notice that Jeff Smith, the president of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario said, in response to a question about whether he would object to having to post profit and loss statements and make them available to the public, "As far as posting them publicly, quite frankly, I do not feel

that it is the public's right to know how a centre is operated."

That is the philosophy that is at stake in the commercial day care operations, and we have heard that philosophy expressed very directly by the nursing home operators. Can the minister tell us what he is going to do to stop the sale and purchase of day care centres by existing licence holders under the scheme he is proposing?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: The point I indicated with reference to the member's comment was that the private operators, quite frankly, will not get the money if they are not prepared to open their books to my ministry's officials. That is it in black and white.

With respect to the transfer of licences, the member is well aware of the fact that that is under the complete control of our ministry. No one has an automatic right to a licence. They have to qualify for that licence. We have made it very clear that we are not prepared to entertain chains operating day care centres in this province.

TARIFFS ON SOFTWOOD LUMBER

Mr. Pope: My question is to the Premier on softwood lumber, his first test as Premier on international trade matters. There are many hundreds of workers in northern Ontario out of work right now. Their families are suffering. Communities like Hornepayne and Nakina are suffering a devastating effect from the imposition of the softwood lumber export tax.

The Premier of this province is responsible. He has shirked his responsibility by blaming the federal government. He started that tack with an interview given to the *Globe and Mail* and adopted the strategy that was further adopted by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil) and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio).

I am entitled to an answer, and so are the hundreds of workers who are out of work now because of his involvement in this issue. In the light of the statements that the Minister of Natural Resources made to Jeff Nash of the *Enterprise* newspaper in Iroquois Falls, we are entitled to know whether the Premier's statements reported in the October 21, 1986, edition of the *Globe and Mail* are true; that is, that his government had not realized Ottawa's intentions to increase lumber industry fees until it read about in the newspaper and that his government had no prior knowledge of Pat Carney's announcement in October.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: We have gone through this I am not sure how many times. As I

understand it, it is an identical question to the one the member asked yesterday and identical to ones he has asked before. I do not know if he has some fixation about this, and he may want to talk about it to his friend Miss Carney, with whom I know he has a close relationship, but the answer is the very same as it was yesterday.

Mr. Pope: This Premier does not care about the hundreds of workers in northern Ontario who are out of work. He is denying his responsibility by saying Pat Carney acted unilaterally and alone and he knew about it only afterwards.

Can the Premier explain the existence of a letter from Mary Mogford, the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, agreeing to a negotiated settlement, agreeing to increase the taxes on the lumber industry, a move that his minister said would cost jobs? This letter is dated September 26, 1986, five days before the Carney announcement. Can he explain the lies that have been going on in the Legislature over this?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: My honourable friend is becoming a one-note Johnny on this issue and is going to go on flogging and flogging and flogging it. I do not mind discussing it with my honourable friend.

As the member knows, the resolution was made during the federal-provincial conference that took place in Vancouver. Miss Carney wanted to go ahead with a 15 per cent settlement, and I disagreed with that. As the member knows, others put pressure on her, and I wish my honourable friend would use some of his great persuasive skills and the great charm that he employs in this House on his federal colleagues, his kissing cousins Miss Carney and the Prime Minister. He might be more persuasive there.

Mr. Pope: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: The Premier agreed to it in writing before it happened. He has now misinformed the House again.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order, the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) and the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson).

PROVINCIAL PARK

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Natural Resources. I would like to give the minister an opportunity to make a commitment to the maintenance of the provincial park system in this province by asking him if he is prepared to expand the current environmental assessment into the Red Squirrel Road near Lady

Evelyn Smoothwater Park to include the approved road extension in the Obabika Lake area.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: This particular road met all the obligations of the Environmental Assessment Act, in the sense that there was a group put into place to examine the ramifications of that road. That was all done in keeping with putting that road in.

In a sense, the problem we have with some of the actions the member would have us take would be to put a stop to those things that have gone through the proper channels. What we are looking at also is getting some of that material to the mills in the areas I am very concerned about.

Certainly, we are examining new ways of doing the environmental assessments that need to be done, as we are in Lady Evelyn on the Red Squirrel Road, and certainly we will take it into account, but I think this one has met all the obligations to this point, and I do not know that we should not leave it to the committee to see it through.

Mr. Wildman: I take from that that the answer is no and that we do not have a commitment from the minister.

Can the minister explain how, if his ministry is approving this particular road leading into the same area for forestry harvesting, it is not, in fact, undermining the environmental assessment on the Red Squirrel Road? He is having an environmental assessment with regard to one road that leads into that area, but apparently he is not prepared to expand it to include the other road. Why have one at all? It is a farce.

1500

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: This is not in the park, and the member knows that. This particular road is not in the park, and there is a great deal of pressure on two of the mills in the area to keep their jobs going, and this is one way to relieve that pressure from the Red Squirrel Road a little bit.

An advisory committee has been put in place that is going to report to the district manager in that area. This one has been handled according to the way it should be, and the fact of the matter is that we are attempting in every way to look at the uses that are going to take place in that park, with the recreational uses and with the maintenance of the jobs in that area. The member cannot stand up and tell us that we are impacting on the jobs in northern Ontario and then ask us to close some other areas down. That is impossible.

Mr. Wildman: I did not ask the minister to close it. I asked him to have an environmental assessment.

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: It is a good thing I am representing northern Ontario.

Mr. Warner: Maybe the squirrels will understand you.

Mr. Gillies: Speaking of red squirrels.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We will just wait if the members want to waste the time so that other members cannot ask questions.

POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Callahan: The former government made a decision that the Ontario Provincial Police headquarters would be moved to the great riding of Brampton. A couple of times in the House, I have asked the Solicitor General whether consideration has been given to maintaining that headquarters transfer to Brampton. I would like to ask the minister at this time whether that position continues and when we can expect that the transfer will take place.

Hon. Mr. Keyes: I know this is of interest to many members on both sides of the House. I can assure them that the relocation team has been very hard at work determining all the needs for the new headquarters. I suggest that the major response is simply the requirement of timing, the funding required for it and the other pressures of development that take place in Toronto. Teams have been looking very carefully at alternative sites since the original announcement, but no final decision has been made on this.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Housing. It has been six months since the minister's new Residential Rent Regulation Act, Bill 51, was passed, yet there has not been a single processed application heard in Ontario. If the minister checks with the Toronto offices of his ministry, he will learn that there are 18,000 landlord applications outstanding. In the Mississauga office, there are 4,423; and in Hamilton, there are 2,120 outstanding applications. The backlog is so bad that the minister's own staff is referring to it as horrifying.

Will the minister please advise this House how many applications are outstanding in his field offices in Ontario today?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the honourable member for being the new critic for Housing. I look forward to some intelligent questions, much more so than what was coming before. The member participated very well in Bill 51. As a matter of fact, I think his leader has given him that position because he

will come to learn and respect the protection of tenants, which was very much required in the past.

I would like to tell the member that the operation of the system is in full gear and there are many applications.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: That is why they do not learn anything. They never listen.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I gather the members do not want an answer and, therefore, they are not getting an answer. How can they ask a supplementary?

Mr. Jackson: The minister has before him in his briefing book the actual numbers I am requesting. He knows that as a fact because his staff has been preparing them for him for more than two months. These outstanding applications are a significant bureaucratic nightmare across Ontario.

If he will just look at what his own ministry is recommending, it recommends that one application should be done during one day's work by a rent administrator in Ontario. If he looks at the 2,120 applications that are on file in the Hamilton office, with only two rent administrators in that location, if they both work with perfect attendance on working days with his ministry, a total of 225 days in a year, it will take more than four years for the minister to clear out the backlog of rental applications that are sitting in just one office in Ontario.

Is the minister going to let the tenants of Ontario live with this kind of administrative nightmare and this type of time line, putting those thousands of tenants in Ontario at risk of suffering with retroactive pay increases to landlords in the thousands of dollars?

Mr. Speaker: The question has certainly been asked.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I am extremely impressed by the member with his statistics. Mr. Speaker, I know you were not in that committee hearing, but I think the statistic the member just quoted of 18,000 is not only Toronto but the entire province.

There were 10,000 applicants in those post-1975 buildings who did not have any way to redress their concerns. Today, I am very happy to know that he has learned so fast that these tenants need protection. He was one of the members who voted against that bill. We knew that there were 10,000 people out there who needed their

concerns to be addressed. We have a guideline in place so they are protected.

I know the member is anxious for all people to be addressed in that light; the process is in place and it is working very effectively.

CONVERSION OF RENTAL ACCOMMODATION

Mr. Grande: My question is also to the Minister of Housing. The minister knows that, two days ago, the Ontario Municipal Board released its decision on 400 Walmer Road, the 575 units that the city of York wanted to convert to condominiums. The minister knows that the OMB decided that those units should stay as rental units, as opposed to being changed to condominiums. The minister also knows that Susan Taylor, the co-ordinator for the rental housing protection branch of his ministry, did not support the conversion.

Given all that, can the minister make a commitment today to those tenants of 400 Walmer, who for the past months have been fearful as to whether they could live there or not, that should an appeal be made to cabinet now, the cabinet will stand behind the OMB decision and behind affordable housing in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member is recognizing a victory for this government that has protected those tenants who were being put out of their building because of conversions, demolitions or other little attitudes that would not protect rental property. The member made mention of the Walmer Road situation where the OMB has ruled in our favour that we should protect those rental properties.

Now the member is asking me whether I am going to endorse the OMB. I am not aware of any appeal at all. Why does he want to anticipate my decisions?

1510

Mr. Grande: Obviously, the Minister of Housing is not ready to say that, as Minister of Housing, he supports Bill 11, a bill which this government supposedly brought in to protect affordable housing in the province.

Since one of the problems the Ontario Municipal Board found with Bill 11 was the fact that, as it states on page 7 of that decision, "No statutory definition or guidelines are provided to assist in determining what is meant by 'affordable rental housing,'" and since the city of York in this case was completely confused in knowing what the provisions in the act are all about, or if there were any provisions, could the minister make a commitment to strengthen Bill 11 so there

is a clear guideline of at least a four per cent vacancy rate before a municipality can approve a conversion?

Instead of leaving that decision in the hands of the bureaucracy, he should make a policy decision.

Hon. Mr. Curling: If I understand the honourable member correctly, he just stated that Bill 11 is working very well. He stated that in that situation the courts have ruled the tenants have a right in that building and it would not be converted to condominiums. But he is asking me to strengthen the bill. I think the bill is working very well, as he can see from the decision made by the Ontario Municipal Board.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: I have a further question for the Minister of Housing. It is true that I voted against this bill because I told the minister in committee and I told him in this House the bill would not work. He had the nerve to stand in this House and tell us he would have it in place within two months, by mid-February. I tell the minister it is already May.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Jackson: As you well know, Mr. Speaker, the guidelines for this new Bill 51 have gone from four per cent up to 5.2 per cent. The minister is well aware that all over Ontario there are increases of 33 per cent and as high as 40 per cent. Will the minister please tell this House the total number of applications in this province for increases that are in excess of 10 per cent or 12 per cent? Does he have an average increase this bill is creating for the tenants in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member has before him the statistics my staff worked so closely with him to provide. He knows about our open government, that anyone who needs those statistics can have them.

He asked about tenants living in post-1975 buildings. Previously they had no protection, so the rents used to increase at random, and as many times as the landlord saw fit.

He asks for statistics. In the post-1975 buildings, we have 10,000 applications to date. He asks too, how many are in excess. We have 4,662 applications asking for over 10 per cent. They are requesting those increases; it does not mean they will get them. They must come to the Rent Review Hearings Board before any approval of such could be given.

If I can correct the honourable member, the guideline did not move from four per cent to 5.2 per cent. When it was set, it was set at 5.2 per

cent; that is the only time a guideline was set for post-1975 buildings.

Mr. Jackson: What I am hearing from the minister is that he is unwilling or he is not forthcoming with respect to what the average increase is on file with his ministry. To try to suggest to this House that he does not have those statistics—I would ask one of the legislative pages to take this document over to the minister, please.

Mr. Speaker: Is this leading to a supplementary?

Mr. Jackson: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

This is a document from his ministerial field staff, as requested by him. This document reads and is headed: "A request for an increase for 10.4 per cent and more under the Residential Rent Regulation Act." etc. It sets out a case in St. Catharines, in the riding of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), of a 40 per cent increase for a property on Carlton Street.

For the minister's benefit, it goes on to explain the background and—this is wonderful; it already provides the minister's response in case there is a question from the Environment minister in this House about this increase.

Mr. Speaker: I hope there is a question.

Mr. Jackson: The question is, given that the minister has not been forthcoming with the fact that he has been tabulating this information, will he now table in this House what the average increase is that has been called for in all the applications currently before his ministry? The minister has that information; let him provide it to this House.

Hon. Mr. Curling: I would like the House to know that these are not the average increases but the requests that have been asked for. At one stage, the honourable member was stating to me that the process is not in place, and in the meantime, he is saying to me that I must give him the average increase. The fact is that the applications are before us and they are requests for increases. I do not see what use it would be to give the member the figures. Of course, we have the figures. We estimate the average will be less than five per cent when all the cases have been heard.

ST. CLAIR RIVER WATER QUALITY

Mrs. Grier: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. In August 1985, I revealed the presence of a blob of poisons on the bed of the St. Clair River. For a while thereafter, a great

deal of attention was paid to that area. That attention seems to have faded.

I am sure the minister's copious briefing notes contain the same information that the Wallaceburg Citizens' Clean Water Coalition has given to me: namely, since the discovery of the blob, there have been almost 200 spills into the St. Clair River from the industries of Chemical Valley. This means the communities that draw their drinking water from the St. Clair are still at risk and are still the victims of chemical pollution. The question is very simple: can the minister explain why he has been unable to prevent the continual contamination of the St. Clair River?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The main difference, which the honourable member will be aware of, is that the spills get reported now. That is the basic difference. What used to happen, of course, was that we did not have extensive reporting of the spills that took place. Now the most minor of spills into any waterway in Ontario, particularly in this area that has received so much attention, receives that kind of attention.

I have been to the area myself. I have inspected some of the work that is taking place. As a result of the attention and the increased activities of the Ministry of the Environment in the area, the industries along there have certainly undertaken a lot of activities designed to prevent those kinds of spills.

It is interesting the member mentions that, because I mentioned it, for instance, to Henry Williams in New York state; he noted a similar situation. Now the reporting requirements are such that each and every spill of any kind, air emission or water emission, is reported regardless of how large it is. I suspect we have considerably fewer spills taking place at the present time. When there are none we will all be happy. It is a matter of the reporting having increased tremendously.

Mrs. Grier: The reporting has not increased or improved all that much. Of the 197 spills that the citizens' coalition has documented since August 1985, in comparing the reports from Environment Canada with those of the Ministry of the Environment, it finds that 20 of them did not show up in the ministry's reporting. I do not think falling back on saying, "We know more about it," is an adequate answer.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mrs. Grier: What the people of the area want to know and what we want to know from the minister is what he is going to do about the fact. He has not built the pipeline the Wallaceburg

people want built. He has not cleaned up the river. He has not done anything about putting in legal drinking water standards so that if they know about a spill they also know what it means for the drinking water.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I will try to remember all the questions the member asked. She asked a multiplicity of questions. The first comment, in regard to the pipeline, is that as she knows, I have indicated the allocation of funds for that pipeline. In other words, it is proceeding as it should. The necessary engineering studies and so on are proceeding through the normal process. We have to go through everything that fits in with the Manual of Administration when we are doing these things. I know the member for Etobicoke (Mr. Philip), who is very cognizant of the Manual of Administration, would not want to see us deviate from that.

1520

In addition to that, the industries along there, under the guidance of the Ministry of the Environment, which now has a much-increased staff at the Sarnia office, for instance, are undertaking the kinds of activities designed to reduce the number of spills in that area.

We have had ongoing monitoring of the water supplies for all the downstream communities and so on, which have indicated that they are within the requirements, generally speaking, of the Ministry of the Environment. We are always improving in that area. I know that when the municipal-industrial strategy for abatement program is in full effect, of course, one of the first industries which will be hit by that will be the petroleum refining industry.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the minister could put it in writing at a later time.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. He will recall last session we were discussing his refusal to pass on the \$150 a month to the disabled that was being made available by the federal government. At that time, he chose to hide behind some federal restrictions, while other provinces chose not to do that and instead passed on the money.

He will be aware, no doubt, that the Minister of National Health and Welfare indicated on Monday evening last that he planned to write a letter to his provincial counterparts removing the restriction which our minister has been hiding behind. With the removal of that restriction, will

he therefore undertake today to pass on the money to the disabled people in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am not aware of that comment by Mr. Epp. I certainly would be prepared to receive it and take a look at it. I would point out to the member that my understanding of the arrangement between the federal and provincial governments is that if a benefit were given to the 13,000 specifically referred to, then the other 70,000 in the province would have to be given the same benefit.

If something has changed, we are prepared to take a look at it.

Mr. Grossman: My question was not whether the minister would be prepared to look at it. We know he would be prepared to look at it; that is his job. The issue is a very simple one. He gave one simple explanation for his refusal to pass on \$150 a month to the disabled. The only reason he gave was not that he did not have the money and not that he was diverting it—and he was diverting it—but simply that there was a federal restriction which he chose to hide behind.

Monday night, in estimates in Ottawa, the minister indicated he was sending a letter to his provincial counterparts to remove that restriction. Given the fact that the minister held out that restriction as the sole reason he held \$150 month out and away from 13,000 disabled people, my question is not whether he will look at it and consider it but, if the restriction has been removed, will he pass that money on to the disabled as soon as he gets the letter?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: My recollection of that discussion a number of months back indicates the decision was based on more than just that one point. It was based on the fact that there was an agreement between the federal and provincial governments. It was also based on the fact that our program in Ontario, as in other parts of the country, is a top-up program, not a replacement program. It was also based on the fact of equity among all 83,000 disabled, not just the 13,000.

I repeat that I am prepared to receive the minister's correspondence and to review it at that time. I cannot give that answer now, because there are other factors involved. It was not just a single factor. I invite the member to go back and check the record.

YOUNG OFFENDERS

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question, in the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), is to the chief law officer of the crown, the Attorney General, going back to this question of young offenders in Ontario.

Has there been any study initiated by the Attorney General or the Premier about the way young offenders are dealt with under the two ministries that have responsibility for them in terms of the differences between how youth court and adult court deal with them, and in terms of the kinds of secure custody that is available and the kind of sentencing that is taking place?

If that review has taken place, has he made any recommendations to the Premier about melding this operation into one ministry so there would be one coherent policy in Ontario to deal with young offenders, as the federal act requires?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, the question of the disposition that is made under the Young Offenders Act by the judges is variable, bearing in mind the provisions of the Young Offenders Act that provide alternative measures, which we in Ontario have, at conclusion of the process.

A number of studies have been done to illustrate to what extent the judges have been selecting one disposition technique or another in cases where a disposition is required, and that is the kind of material I would be glad to try to collect for him, showing what the judges have been doing with their new powers under the act.

Of course, when the judges order a secure disposition, it is because of the divided responsibility, which the member has referred to, by either one ministry or the other. I have had occasion from time to time to talk to both my colleagues about this matter. We discuss fully the extent to which the disposition systems existing in the province are appropriate.

A case can be made, and I think it is made, that the Ministry of Correctional Services has had significant experience with mature young offenders—that is, 16 and over—whereas the Ministry of Community and Social Services has had a traditional experience with people younger than that, who are in fact children. That is the justification for the situation that presently exists in Ontario.

PETITIONS

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: Mr. Speaker, I know you will be waiting to learn of today's new total.

Mr. Morin-Strom: What is it?

Mr. Warner: The member is going to have to wait until I read this.

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

It is signed by 112 persons, bringing the total now to 1,668, with more to come.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Ms. Gigantes: I have two petitions. The first is from 228 taxi drivers in the Ottawa area who are calling upon the government to bring in a driver-owned public auto insurance system in Ontario.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTING

Ms. Gigantes: The second comes from a group of certified general accountants in Ontario who petition the government to give them the right to practise public accounting in Ontario. It is signed by 152, most of whom are certified general accountants.

DRUG WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION ALLOWANCE

Mr. McGuigan: I have a petition from six constituents to accommodate a drug wholesaler's distribution allowance.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Breaugh from the standing committee on the Legislature Assembly presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 34, An Act to provide for Freedom of Information and Protection of Individual Privacy.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for committee of the whole House.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL

TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Conway moved first reading of Bill 55, An Act to amend the Teachers' Superannuation Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am pleased to introduce today this bill to amend the Teachers' Superan-

uation Act to allow teachers with 35 years of service and who have not attained the age of 65 to retire without penalty for a period of three years.
1530

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Mr. Breagh: I had begun the other day to list some of the things I very much wanted to see in this throne speech and which really were not there. I want to comment a little on what was there and the style and the format, because if there is anything to be learned from the throne speech, it probably is that there is now a government attempting to put forward its face, to try to establish its identity. In many respects, as some members have observed, this is kind of our first venture into yuppie land here.

I do not know who wrote this throne speech. If I did I probably would not admit to it, but I do think whoever wrote it was listening to Paul Simon's new record. There is a sense that they are—or they think they are—going into their form of Graceland, their Mecca, their kind of plastic Taj Mahal, where they will sell their little version of the picket fence. There are a lot of strains as it goes through that.

As I listened to the songs again this morning, I could detect a certain liberalism in there. I recall one lyric, where they talk about Fat Charlie the Archangel who was filing for a divorce. He has no opinion on this and he has no opinion on that. It seems to me that theme is an integral part of the throne speech. There is a lot of touching of many groups here.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Did you say Fat Charlie the Archangel?

Mr. Breagh: Fat Charlie the Archangel is filing for divorce. I did not write the song. I just repeat the lyrics. I do not even try to attribute who Fat Charlie might be, either.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I could never understand the words. I just tap my hands to the music.

Mr. Breagh: There is nothing in the record about Fat Charlie going around spending phoney 50-pound notes, so I assume the Treasurer is off the hook on that.

The record is an interesting one. I listened to some of the discussion and the controversy about this record put together by Paul Simon, about

many people feeling that it was not really true to its nature. For some reason the reputation had grown that this was a recording about African music. Of course, as you listen to it, it is not. It has very little to do with that. It is about American music and it is about an American person, Paul Simon, and all the things that have fused into his musical background, all the things that he understands. It is very much about that fusion of cultures, songs and lyrics that are the United States. It has nothing to do with Africa, except perhaps that some of the music and some of the musicians who recorded the album were African.

In many ways, the thing is something like the throne speech. It is mythical. There is a little touching, a grabbing, a fusing of all different kinds of streams and cultures and trying to jam them into something. So the throne speech is in large measure an attempt to get a new government in place. It is a decidedly upwardly mobile government. We have all noticed that. It is why one will pick out the immediate conflicts of a throne speech that talks about moderation, all things to all people, almost a classic Liberal theme at work here. They expound upon that at a great length.

They try to put together, to mould something which cannot be seen by anyone as controversial. It avoided at great length any pitfalls of actually doing anything. The backbone and the thrust of the throne speech is to make sure they cannot be accused of doing the wrong thing. They do that simply by not doing anything. That is in large measure, I suppose from the government side of the House, a great strength. Nobody can accuse them of being bad for being in favour of literacy. I understand that. I think we had looked for and had anticipated more than that, and it is certainly not there.

There is a lot of election fever around this place these days and a lot of chit-chat about the end of the accord, the deal is over, the honeymoon is over and all of that. I want to speak briefly about that process, because I do think it needs to be put on the record that those of us who were participants in negotiating this historic agreement understood the pitfalls as we went through.

There were very few people who had no knowledge of the legislative process involved in that. So we did understand that the accord would not produce legislation that we liked. It will cause an initiative, it will cause the legislative process to start up; but it does not necessarily mean that at the end of that process we will get a

law written in the way we want it. We understood that, where perhaps others did not.

I believe this legislative flow is important. I also believe it is not yet completed, and for those who are entertaining thoughts of exploiting current popularity in the polls, I caution them very seriously that there is work to be done and there will be a very heavy price paid by those who seek to exploit something without getting their jobs done.

I think all members in this House made a commitment to certain types of legislation. We have spent a long time working on that legislation. Not to go through with that would be ludicrous at this state.

I want to pick a couple of examples that I think are particularly critical.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: Emergency debates.

Mr. Breagh: If people are so upset that they do not want to have an emergency debate in here, they should move to change the rules so that we can never have one. If the member is so upset that one or two afternoons are set aside to deal with business that members on this side think is important, then he has a complete misunderstanding of the parliamentary process.

The process is here, the rules are here, and not just for the convenience of the government. They are here for everybody. There are those who will say that some intervention in the process, like emergency debates, is all wrong; that the opposition members should have no rights, ever, to put forward items they think are important. I do not subscribe to that. I do not subscribe for a moment to any contemplation that there has been any gross interruption of the legislative process here. There has not.

I will not listen to that kind of garbage very much longer. There has not been. There has been inconvenience to the government; okay, I will accept that. The government's pacing has been upset; I will accept that. Somebody is barracking about the sad and terrible fact that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) had to wait an extra legislative day to introduce his budget. Give me a break. Help us to understand, dear Lord, this kind of foolishness. This is nonsensical; absolutely, totally nonsensical.

I understand the process. I have been around here long enough to know that it is the government House leader's job now to break this ground, to find occasions during the course of our legislative weeks when he could say, "Oh, the opposition is obstructing; it is doing bad things." He knows that at some point, if the Premier (Mr. Peterson) decides to have an

election, somebody has to plow up those furrows. One cannot wake up one morning and decide we are being obstructionist over here. One has to say that 20,000 or 30,000 times and work that into one's daily routine so that by the time one actually decides to have an election, one will have covered that ground a little bit.

We all understand that process. But one does not serve any useful purpose by all of that. As members of the Legislature, we are supposed to understand those games, because that is precisely what they are: they are games.

I want to touch on a couple of pieces of legislation that I think are really important before the members seriously contemplate having elections.

Finally, this morning in committee, after more than a year's work, we took the freedom of information bill to the next step and reported it this afternoon. That is a bill which, to be blunt about it, is most likely to come out of a minority government only. No government with a majority, in its right mind probably, would pass a freedom of information bill. We have watched the previous government struggle its way through minorities and avoid that pitfall, but when it had majorities it had absolutely no interest in freedom of information. It did not truly believe it was in its self-interest to release public documents on a regular basis. It always wanted to control the flow of information as much as it could. It struggled very hard with that.

If we are to do a service to the people of Ontario, I would say that before we start thinking about elections we ought to deal with that legislation. We know that in this day and age it is important. We know it is a concept which is workable. The federal government in Canada does it. Many jurisdictions in the US do it.

1540

The freedom of information bill is not the panacea for anything. What we have begun here is simply to start a process, and the process is, very simply put, that the people who pay the bills have a right to know how the bills were incurred. I believe that is a pretty valid principle, and because I believe in that I was happy to spend more than a year in my own committee plugging away at how we would do this; because it is going to be, and we all admit it, a very complicated, difficult thing to implement, but not impossible. Others have done it and so can we, and so should we.

That bill, as it goes through its final legislative phases, is one which I think needs to be dealt with by this Legislature.

There are other bills. The conflict of interest bill has been reintroduced. I would contend, quite frankly, that in this day and age, when the political process is being challenged so regularly, conflict of interest legislation which is understandable, I suppose by the general population and by the members, is something that really has to happen.

I am not a big fan of the current legislative proposals that have been put forward by the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) for this simple reason: they are written almost from a lawyer's perspective. They have to do with the filing of documents, shuffling around pieces of paper, seeking legal advice. I admit that is part of a conflict of interest act, one cannot avoid it; but the critical point is, does the public believe that by means of this legislation you have taken away as much as you can by a legislative tool the conflicts that have been so apparent in our own federal government and that have plagued the political process for a long time now?

I am using perhaps somewhat extreme language, but I do believe that is true. There was a time when people really believed almost anything politicians told them. No matter how cockamammy a story it was, they had a tendency to believe that. I believe that in this day and age, because they watch us as we go through the legislative process in a much different way, they know the process is not nearly as perfect as it was once thought to be, and the process itself is in some disrepute.

In some measure, it is our fault. In some measure, it is the media's fault. In some measure, I suppose, it is the public's fault. One goes back to the old maxim that the public gets the kind of government it deserves in the end, and perhaps that is true.

I want to pick a couple of examples of things that I think are unfortunate. An American example is Gary Hart, perhaps a politician who got what he deserved; I do not know, I do not even know him. But I do know that some remarkable things happen around somebody who is running for the presidential nomination of a big political party in the US.

Some reporters took him up on his invitation to follow him around about his personal life. It would appear to me from the newspaper reports I read that they did not do much of a job of reporting, to the extent that they were not quite sure whether there was a front door and a back door to the house where this incident was to have occurred. They did not do a good reporting job, but it was enough that the innuendo that this man

was some kind of a womanizer stuck, and stuck to the degree that he stopped being a nominee for his party. He quit.

That is a new wrinkle in the political process, and we have some here in Canada which would follow a similar analogy. Having read all the political opinions and the columnists and those who appear on television talk shows and followed this discussion for the last little while, I really do not know whether we are better off having a political process which is dominated about a politician's private life. I do not know what is to be served by that. I suppose that, in some measure, the politicians themselves invite that. They invite that every time they put a picture of their family on a newsletter or on an election campaign pamphlet.

I suppose we invite people into our private lives a lot, but I want to draw this line. There has to be a place where the public person stops and the private person is still allowed to survive, or the process itself will become such a phoney, transparent process it will serve no value. We are here in this Legislature not to be superperfect people. We are here to represent the population, warts and all; and that means, in my book, that we will have the faults and the virtues that are all around us in our society, that we will be susceptible to all the problems our society is having, that people in the political process will not have the same kind of marriages, I suppose, as everybody in our society once had and thought perhaps they could still retain. That will change as the society changes.

In this respect, I am probably a very old-fashioned person, but I do not know that the public political process is served very well by intense scrutiny of a politician's personal life. I am grappling with that. I understand the fascination with all this. As a matter of fact, when the Gary Hart story broke in the US, I must admit I am cynical enough to have thought for a moment that somebody in a back room somewhere thought his candidate, Gary Hart, was having problems getting known by the American public and thought that perhaps this might be a really jazzy way to get him on the front pages. It certainly did that. I am not sure the plan exactly worked as promised, but it certainly did do that. That again is the knowledge that you can exploit the media by offering them something that is sensational. I understand all this, but I really rue that day.

To come back to my original point, we now have to address conflict of interest laws in legislation. I wish we did not, in a sense, but I

understand that we must. I understand that the old gambit that we were all honourable members and no one would ever do that is not going to work any more. There is now a need for more than guidelines, but a law. It must be a law that is understandable by the general public. I would hope, and this is one of my concerns, it is not something that is going to drive people in the political process crazy. I hope that is not the end result of the exercise, but it may be.

The people on my committee and I have had an opportunity to look at legislation of this kind in other jurisdictions, and I must say that if I were running for public office in the US and I was faced with the disclosure, the inquiries and the invasion of my privacy that are suggested in many American jurisdictions, I would have second thoughts. I am not so sure I would want complete police investigations of not only my background but of the background of all my family and virtually everybody with whom I am associated as well. I am not so sure I would be prepared to do that. In many American jurisdictions they are. I am not terribly convinced that every cent that is owned by me or any member of my family has to be a matter of public record. In some American jurisdictions it is.

I want to point out an example of where I think this is really going to go flooey. I believe that concept is based on the premise that the only people who will be in public office are married men, and they will be older married men as well. Those laws are written in that way. What I think is wrong about that is, what if it is the wife who is the elected person? The laws are skewed so that puts not only the wife in a difficult position but the husband in a difficult position, the daughter in a difficult position and the son in a difficult position as well. We may be writing laws here that mean people cannot run for public office.

I think we have to address that when we go through our own legislative process on this, because that is not my intention and I do not think it is the intention of the members of the public at large. What they want is some openness to the process. They want to be able to ensure that if we do something wrong, it will be breaking the law. I think that is simply what they seek. They do not want an apology; they do not want us to say: "It is okay. That is the way we have always done things." If we have done something wrong, we have broken the law just as they would have if they had been stopped for speeding on their way home that night. That is another bill that I think has to be done.

Here is another one. We have a bill before us regarding pensions. Before anybody starts thinking about elections around here, that bill has to go through the legislative process as well. There are people whom I know who are living on pensions that are really sad; very difficult. I will go further than that. I know people who have come out of well-organized industrial trade union plants who thought they had a really good, negotiated private pension, and it has not stood the test of time particularly well at all. I would make an argument that pension reform is a matter this Legislature has to deal with.

1550

Let me give one other example and then try to work this into when we might contemplate an election. We have gone through the agony, and I use that word carefully, of the discussions around equal pay for work of equal value. How silly it would be at this time to drop that process on the vague hope that we might begin the process again at some later date. We have gone through the public hearing sessions. We have gone through discussions of pay equity in the private sector and in the public sector. We have negotiated with everybody we can think of around that matter. We are near the point when the legislative process is actually liable to do something.

I believe that is incredibly important to a large number of women and families in our society, because one of the things that concerns me is laws, written from one perspective, that do not apply any more. Again, I think all our laws around how we pay people were basically on the proviso, for example, that a minimum wage was a wage that would probably go to a part-time worker and were probably written with the thought in mind that this was a high school kid who would get a job for a couple of hours after school.

The sad thing is that the employment trends are in the exact opposite direction. More and more people are falling into those service sector jobs, many of them part-time, a few full-time, but at minimum wage or just barely above that. That is hitting more and more people. More and more of that group are having to support an entire family. I believe that pay equity laws, in whatever version comes through the hoop at the end, are matters that this parliament must deal with.

Those are four areas that I believe make up my personal list. I suspect there will be other members who will have laws that they just have to have too. If I put my mind to it, I could probably double or triple the number. The point is that if this parliament is to serve any useful

purpose in the history of mankind, it has to have done something other than try to look good. It has to have had a legislative agenda.

For me, to tell you the truth, it does not matter whether it comes out of the accord or elsewhere, but I believe this parliament has an obligation to do something, not to take something part-way through the process. Those four bills I mentioned are matters that have been introduced. Some have gone through committee, some have had very long hearings and some are down to the final amendments and when they will be put. I think it is incumbent on us to complete that work and a good deal more.

I heard the Premier say today that the legislative agenda is jammed. Yes, it is. There is no question that in the last two years we have been very busy little legislators. We have been doing the legislative process and we have tried to deal with all the interventions that none of us count on, but that is what politics is about. You have to set aside one agenda and pick up another.

In the end people will judge us, I hope, on whether this parliament served a useful purpose. There is little value in saying it put a new government, another political party, in power after 42 years. I suppose there is a little balancing of the democratic process that has been redressed there. More than that, the people have a right to expect that we have been here for a couple of years doing some legislation and that the legislation addresses some very real human needs.

In my book, there are those bills and others that do just that. I would like to be able to go around during the course of the next election campaign saying: "Here is what we would like to do in the future, but here is also what we have done in the past. Here is a record of what we tried to accomplish in a minority government. Here are the things we actually did accomplish." The matters I and others talked about are things that are not theoretical victories; they are of real practical assistance to the people we represent. I believe that is important.

Let me offer another little scenario of what I think will probably happen here. I believe the game plan, although this could get upset at any time, is probably not a bad one. We complete the spring session of the Legislature; we get as much of the legislation processed as we can. I believe that in the next week or so we will see a very attractive budget.

I have no objection to that, although I understand in his first little trip around England trying to give out money, the Treasurer of

Ontario did run into some difficulties. I suspect he will overcome those when he is back at home with real Canadian money in his hand. He will understand the process a little better and he will know the difference between a phoney 50-pound note and a real cheque for \$50,000. He will be on firmer ground.

I think the Treasurer has to come in with a budget which is realistic. We all know he has a budget which is going to have a whole lot of money, a billion dollars or so, that he did not anticipate in revenue. He knows what the needs are in Ontario, and I hope he addresses those. I hope he does not forget—and before he tables his budget, this is a concern of mine—there is a tendency to say the poor do not need our attention any more. I do not understand why, in the midst of a booming economy here in southern Ontario, we have food banks that are so busy they cannot handle their work load. We have not seen that kind of process here in the southern part of the province since the Great Depression, and we are supposed to be in economic boom times.

In a community like mine, with the automotive industry kind of thumping along these days, there are supposed to be very low unemployment rates; there is supposed to be an economic boom under way; there is supposed to be a rosy future for almost everybody. But the reality is—and people who are members perhaps know this a little better than others—that for some people there is no boom here, there is a bust under way.

In many parts of the northern part of our province there is a real depression taking hold; because in many of those northern communities it is not a loss of jobs. In my community, for example, we have become painfully accustomed to the idea of plant closures; although we hope that a year from now another plant will open up and somebody else will do something; at least we have some options.

In many parts of the north there are no options. If the mill closes, that is it for that community, and the whole thing folds and goes away and never comes back. The north is full of communities that at one time were bright, vibrant places to live, with a good future, a good paycheque and a chance to raise a family with some hope for the future. They are now ghost towns, places with houses and no people, people with mills, mines and factories that have been empty for a long time. We need to address those needs as well.

I believe the approach will probably fall something like this: a budget that begins to go at that, I hope; and then, when we have adjourned for the summer, the Premier and the cabinet and

everybody else they can think of will hit the road with their chequebooks in hand. I do not know whether that is exactly what will happen, but I suspect it will, because it sure has been happening a lot in my area lately.

Mr. Mancini: Just the regular operations of the government, that is all.

Mr. Breaugh: Listen, I do not mind this. They can come to Oshawa any time they want as long as they bring their chequebooks. Just fill in the bottom and I will fill in the top, and we will all be happy. They do not even have to invite me.

The member for Durham West (Mr. Ashe) was incensed that the member for Middlesex (Mr. Reycraft), who is parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education, came to Oshawa and held a press conference and invited the local Liberal candidate and did not invite any of us. I do not care. If he brings the cheque, he can have anything he wants in my riding. If he gives somebody in Oshawa some money to do something good, I will gladly stay away from it. He does not have to invite me. I will not abuse him; I will not criticize his efforts.

If he comes to town and all he gives them is a line of malarkey and no money, I am going to abuse him about that; but if he comes to my community and he gives somebody in Oshawa a whole lot of money, I am happy. I do not care whether I am there or not. It seems to me a little stupid on the member's part that he does not invite the local member to these things. In my opinion, and I am an expert on this, I believe that is simply rude behaviour, that is all.

I believe that is simply bad manners, and I do not think anybody wins when he displays bad manners. If he came to my home, I would expect him to tell me he was coming and I would try to welcome him and assist him in any way I could. If he comes to my riding and he tells me he is coming, I will try to welcome him and I will try to introduce him to people in my community who are active people, who will do good things for him and who can assist him a lot.

I must say that although the practice has been a bit spotty, for the most part it has been my experience in the last couple of years that the ministers of the crown do that. I congratulate them on having the good, plain common sense and decency to do that. There have been a few who have not. They did not gain very much by doing that.

In a strange way, when a member comes to Oshawa, if he does not invite the local member to come to events, our people say, "Why were you so ignorant as not to ask the local member to

attend?" When he asks the local member to attend, I hope he will find that, unfailingly, I or any of the other local members will say: "Here is a good person who is trying to do something for you, folks. Give him a chance, listen to what he has to say and accept his advice, his guidance, his money and anything else he has got."

My advice to the government is, where it has been faithful about informing local members about events or things that it is going to do, to continue that practice. I think that makes eminent good sense in a very real way. As members of this Legislature, we do have some role to play in representing our own constituencies. Every time we do something that enhances that role, we enhance the whole political process. Every time we do something that cheapens that role, that cheapens the entire process as well. The choice is the member's. I can have it either way; it does not really bother me a whole lot.

1600

If someone wants to come to my town and take cheap shots at me, I suspect he will pay a price for that. If someone wants to come to my town and asks me to participate in whatever he is doing, I think he will benefit by that. I really do not care, because I think the purpose of the exercise is not for the government's advantage or my advantage. The purpose of the exercise ought to be to solve some problems, to provide some funding to a group that deserves some funding or to provide some new programs. If the government does those things, we will all be happy about it.

I believe the process itself is enhanced when the government does that and I believe the process is really cheapened every time somebody takes cheap shots at somebody else. There is truth to the old maxim that every time you throw a little muck at somebody, you cannot keep your hands clean, some of it sticks to you. Every time you cheapen the political process some of that sticks to you as well; you cheapen yourself.

I will talk about one or two other matters that I think are important to us and that have come up in the last little while. There has been a fair amount of discussion in our federal parliament—I think they concluded a day's debate yesterday, and there has certainly been a lot of media analysis—about the Meech Lake accord. I want to touch on that a bit, not that we in this House are ready to have a full-fledged debate about that, although I hope we will. Some groundwork needs to be laid.

For example, I believe that it would be good advice to this government to say to the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, or some other committee that the members prefer, that we

need a process whereby the people in Ontario can voice their opinions. I do not think this has to be a big deal. I do not think there are a whole lot of folks in this province who want to put together a big discussion paper around constitutional reform, reform of the Senate or anything else, but I do know there are some.

There are some learned people in Ontario who could provide the members of this Legislature with some very good advice. I know they will have an opportunity to write me a letter. There is a difference between writing me a personal letter, or writing a letter to the Premier or anybody else in here, and having the opportunity to appear before a committee of the Legislature to present a position. There is a distinction to be made. We would all be well served by a process of that kind.

I am not advocating a long series of hearings, but I do think that we could set aside a couple of weeks of our time over the course of the summer or in the month of June and have one of our committees provide that vehicle for the public. I believe it would be useful just to hear what people who are interested in that field have to say.

The critical point of the Meech Lake accord, as I see it, lies not with the detail of its work, but with the recognition that that accord, while it may bring the province of Quebec into Canada, it may reform the Senate and it may do a whole lot of other things, is a turning point in the history of the country. Canada will never be quite the same place once that accord is put into place. It is a substantive change that is being talked about. I believe there are some matters in there that have to be fully understood before they are agreed to. I am a little bit concerned that some people who have made observations about it are correct.

I do not know why it was possible to do in a short period of time what has eluded us for so long, but it is apparent to me that the Prime Minister of Canada desperately wanted a significant political victory on constitutional matters. He desperately needed to establish his credentials and his ability to do that, and he had to do it now. In crass political terms, he is having continued difficulties—let me be polite about it—governing the country. He needed some historic agreement to be signed about something, and it did not matter a lot what it was or what it said, as long as he accomplished something. That is my concern.

I have read the newspaper analysis of it and read what there is of the Meech Lake accord. I am happy in the sense that we have come to an agreement. That is good news, real good news. It seems to me there are not insurmountable

problems raised, but in the response to it, it is also clear to me that there could be some dandy problems on the horizon. Unless everybody decides to get agreeable all the time from here on in, there are going to be some real impasses. We may have resolved one problem and created several others.

That may not be the case. The wording of the agreement is not done yet. The nuances of what the agreement means are not all clearly understood by all sides. But there is a need now to take a little bit of time: to pause, to analyse, to understand and to draft into the formal agreement, as clearly as we can, precisely what we mean; to listen to those who are not a party to this accord, and to be particularly mindful of the bitter paradox that is there when you look at the struggle native people had in this country to become part of the Constitution, to achieve their reforms, to establish their needs, to make good the payment on agreements that were struck some many years ago.

The political leadership in Canada was unable to reach agreement on that. I would have said, quite frankly, that their case was well put. It is certainly well understood. It has been around a long time. No agreement was possible there. The stark comparison between what was not possible for our native people and what was possible in the Meech Lake accord just cannot go away from my mind. I think we have to resolve that. It has to be resolved.

If some who have read it say the Meech Lake accord basically means all the players are in now and they have the opportunity to blackball anybody else who might come in later, whether that is native people or new provinces from the Northwest Territories or the Yukon or wherever, I think that would be another matter entirely and that has to be carefully thought through.

I want to conclude by saying that in the budget and in the throne speech, I have some hopes. I have some hopes that the government will now begin to respond to those whom I represent in my own constituency and across the province, working people who have some real needs. I understand that often their needs are not—how shall I put this?—high on the political hit list. They very often need things which cost a lot of money and do not have much political bang to them, like a decent pension.

I understand that, and I understand that the tendency on the part of the Treasurer, when he announces his budget and proceeds through the pre-election period, will be to do the traditional means of gathering votes. You pick up education

and you hit on that for a while, you pick up health and you hit on that for a while, and you pick up things like roads and you hit on them for a while. You are mindful that the cheap part is to build a new wing on a hospital; the expensive part is to operate that wing for 20 or 30 or 50 years. The cheap part is to build a new school or add a classroom on a school; the expensive part is to keep the school in operation for as long as it is needed. The cheap part is to build the road in the first place.

The previous government became a master at this. They understood how to get the most political bang for the tax dollar. They knew how to put up the big signs. They would always announce. If they were building a new road, they would announce it eight or nine times before they would actually do it.

The GO train to Oshawa is perhaps the most poignant example I can think of. The thing has been around for a decade. It has been announced 25 times. It is always announced just before the next provincial election. There is always a new signboard going up announcing that Ontario is extending GO trains to Oshawa.

It has got to the point where I do not even listen to the announcements any more. What I do is I drive on Highway 401 and I look over to the construction site. If there are people working over there, I am happy the thing is going along. When I do not see any construction going on, I get concerned that nothing is happening. It is almost at the point where you cannot believe the political announcements any more.

The previous government was really good at this. Members may recall that Bill Davis became a very successful politician in this province by building the education system. He gave us all kinds of regional schoolboards, new composite high schools and all that stuff. But he took it to the point where he knew that the most political advantage was gained by building the school, cutting the ribbon and then getting away from that. They built the schools, they cut the ribbons and then they lowered their support for education generally. They wanted to step back from that.

I see some signs that this government is playing that same song. They want to open up some classrooms and cut some ribbons, but they do not want the long-term financial commitment that is necessary to operate schools according to the needs of students. There are some really silly things going on in education these days, and there are also some real critical needs that have to be addressed.

1610

I think they may exhibit a tendency to open up some new wings on hospitals somewhere without addressing the real health needs that are just below the surface and perhaps not so identifiable. Maybe it will not be quite so dramatic when the government brings in a proper nursing home program. Maybe it will not be quite so dramatic when they address themselves to the matter of proper child care. Maybe they are, in their early statements now about things such as that, exploring the whole option of how we could put a little money in at the front end and grab the most political credit without getting sucked into long-term financial commitments to really doing things.

I hope they do not do that. I hope they do not decide that the world consists of all those who are listening to Paul Simon's tunes these days; all the kinds of uptown yuppies who are around. Some of them are doing well. Some of them have two incomes, two cars and take regular vacations. There are also a lot of folks in my riding—and this is not news to the Legislature—who have no place to live. That is really dumb. In a place such as Oshawa that is supposedly booming economically, why are there no places for the poor to live? And it is true that there are not.

They come to see me and I say, "Well, we have a housing authority and we will try to get you on the waiting list there, but there are no units available." We are building a few new units, that is true, but this summer in Oshawa, in the midst of all this economic boom, there are still going to be people sleeping on the streets and they will be off in the parks with their pup tents again this summer. That is really, in my view, a crime. One does not have to leave the legislative grounds to find these folks. They are around here, they are certainly evident in the city of Toronto and they are evident in every community to some degree or other.

The poor still have their problems and I would really like to see this bright, young government pause for a moment in the midst of all the hyperbole that is in the speech from the throne and come at us in the budget and say, "There are all these wonderful things we would really like to do, but there are also some real needs that have to be addressed over here." Maybe they are not really dramatic—they are not nearly as dramatic as building a domed stadium—but they are the reasons we need governments to do certain things.

There has been some angry debating here about public auto insurance and the insurance

companies. I really do not have much time for theoretical politics. It has never been my strong point. I have virtually no interest in it. What I am interested in is when a guy comes to me and he is 82 years old and some insurance company wants \$2,000 to insure his car. That is morally wrong; that is really what it is. In the old days, they would have called that usury.

If the insurance companies do not want a publicly-run auto insurance plan, there is a really simple way for them to avoid it: lower the rates and stop ripping off folks. If they do that, then people will look at all our arguments about public auto insurance being a wonderful thing and say: "Well, it is a wonderful thing, but we do not need it. Forget that one. Go on to something else."

The reason it is here now and staying as a political issue is that the insurance companies have not learned. I do not care how much money they spend on television ads about why car insurance costs are up; if they keep mailing those little premium notices that say the premiums have gone from \$400 to \$800 a month, their television spots do not work. When they drive by the Co-Operators on Bloor Street and they see the big downtown Toronto office building with the big grey stretch limousine in front, they understand a little bit about the insurance companies' high overhead, but it does not strike a very sympathetic chord.

I talked to a young guy in Gravenhurst last week. He bought a new truck that cost him \$9,000, and his insurance is going to cost him \$4,000. This is obscenity. That is what it is. That is why this government, whether it wants to do it or not, is going to have to respond in a real way to that problem, and there is a host of others.

I will conclude by saying that the speech from the throne does not give one a whole lot to talk about in specific terms. It talks in generalities, and that is fine. I thought it was a great day until we moved inside. I liked the new uniforms on the guards outside, back to the air force blue. I think that is swell. They fired off the cannons in the back lot and nobody got hurt. I am always grateful for that. I thought the bands were wonderful. I thought the Lieutenant Governor did his job the way it is supposed to be done until he read the speech.

The speech was a bit unfortunate. There was not really very much there that would establish anything that one could put a handle on except that this is a new government struggling with its image. That is fine; the government has a right to try to mould a new image for itself. But it also has an obligation not to leave it at the image stage. It

should do something substantial for the people whose needs are real. It has a legislative program which is well under way and which we ought to complete before people start living out their fantasies about elections.

I will put this cheap political advice to the government before I conclude. All the polls I read tell me that this government is very strongly identified with one person. This has been true in many ways in Ontario politics for the last long period of time. The Premier is immensely popular right now; but I will put this caution to the government and it can listen to it if it wants or forget about it, it does not matter much to me.

Whenever the government is hung so closely to one person, that person had better be infallible. If that person thinks he can go for a lengthy period of time and not get caught saying the wrong thing or doing the wrong thing, that person had better be without any problems whatsoever.

I contend that the Premier could use a little more seasoning. I would put to the government that the Premier would be well served by having a legislative record that is substantial, because if this government thinks it can go through the elective process dealing only with images, I caution that it will never make it through.

To back up my point, I will point to two recent political memories in Canada. One is a guy named John Turner, who started off an election campaign very high in the poll. There are those who were accurately saying that 25 political appointments made by the previous Prime Minister put him in a hole he never got out of. That is a lesson people ought to learn.

The previous Conservative government began an election campaign very high in the polls and watched it all dissipate during the course of one electoral period. That can happen again; I believe that will happen again.

My advice to the government in a response to the speech from the throne is that it is fine; now let us set that aside and get the budget in place. Let us complete the commitment we have made to the people of Ontario of a legislative program that addresses some of their needs; not all, but some. Then, when we have done that, let the government fantasize all it wants about elections and call all the elections it wants. Nobody on this side will object.

For me personally, the government can call the election now if it wants. I do not care. I had my little election planning committee in Oshawa together for a couple of meetings in the last few weeks. They are a little tired, they would rather

go fishing and there are a whole lot of things they would rather do; but they are ready, as they always are. They are a tough, mean bunch of people, and advertising programs will not shake them. They will hit the streets and be real mean and nasty, because that is the kind of politics they understand. They are serious about it.

I caution the government not to fantasize, to get the work load done and then decide when it would be appropriate to have an election. I think the throne speech is supportable because I too am strongly in favour of literacy, moderation and all those things.

Mr. D. R. Cooke: I would like first to compliment the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh), because he strikes me as one of the more level-headed members of this assembly and indeed his is a very reasonable approach to politics. While I would hope the government does not take all the advice he handed out to heart, some of it is very interesting and well-meaning indeed.

To take a more objective example, I would be surprised myself if the suggestion he made that the planning of the exposure of the personal life of Gary Hart was done within his own campaign quarters is accurate. I suppose a certain amount of cynicism has come out of the member for Oshawa's views that I do not necessarily share. In any event, it is a level-headed approach to politics that he always brings and I compliment him for it.

1620

That has not necessarily been the case so far in the debate on this throne speech, nor in the emergency debates which have been interrupting the throne speech. I am quite serious when I suggest there has been a lot of lallygagging in this assembly, and the people who are watching this process on cable television may have reason to be not that happy generally with what they are seeing.

Frankly, I would fault the Conservatives in particular—not the one Conservative who is in the House at the moment, but some of the Conservatives seem to be spinning their wheels in debate. They seem to be prolonging the business of this House unnecessarily with long-winded and unnecessary speeches, perhaps in the hope that something will happen to turn the tide of public opinion in their favour, perhaps in some cases just to prolong their paycheques a few more weeks before they are terminated.

I am reminded of the comment in the Koran, the Islamic holy book, "The harshest sound in nature is the braying of an ass."

I do want to remind the public that a lot of good work is going on in this Legislature right now, at least in committees. For instance, the committee which I chair, the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, is sitting unsung at this moment, members of all three political parties working together, co-operating on a very complicated piece of legislation, Bill 116, which is an act completely revising the Loan and Trust Corporations Act. In the future this province will be able to control loan and trust corporations and deal with them in confidence so that the scandals and frauds which may have occurred in the past will never occur again.

In so doing, we are dealing in a clause-by-clause way—and I can say there is a great deal of co-operation going on between all three parties in this regard—with what I understand to be one of the longest bills, if not the longest bill, in the history of our Legislature. It is the first corporate commercial bill to be dealt with in both official languages. All is not just hot air in the work of this Legislature.

I would like to spend a few minutes in this historic debate on a few matters that concern me.

It is difficult now, in the spring of 1987, to be less than enthusiastic about Ontario, about our hopes for the future, about our relative satisfaction, subject always to the possibility of bettering the lives our people have and what is going on.

I believe His Honour's speech correctly reflects the concerns, the beliefs and the dreams of most Ontarians and, if I may say so as their representative, most Kitchenerites. It sets a new agenda for the government, yet one that builds upon earlier commitments, a new agenda for facing up to the social and economic implications of changing demographics. In that regard, I would correct the member for Oshawa in that I think there is a great deal of reflection on some of the concerns we have.

There are indeed pockets of poor in this province. They are in all the cities of this province. The throne speech does reflect that. It reflects the need for better day care. It reflects the need for greater payments to welfare. It also reflects the meeting of challenges of an increasingly competitive international environment that we have to face up to in order to continue the strength which exists in the province today. It reflects the need to restore excellence by returning to the basics in our education system.

The current economic buoyancy is the result of many factors. We are not suggesting—and the Treasurer and the Premier have not suggested—that we should take all the credit for that

buoyancy. Not the least of the reasons for the buoyancy is Ontario's favourable place in the world economy and the leading thrust given in the transportation equipment industry, which has an anticipated real output increase for 1987 in the nature of about five per cent. The bustle is continuing with the \$2-billion General Motors project, the new AMC plant in Brampton, GM-Suzuki in Ingersoll, Toyota in Cambridge, Honda in Alliston and the Chrysler mini-van plant in Windsor.

As well, though Ontario is buoyant today, because we have a strong and reputable government with a frugal and reputable Treasurer, who has managed this buoyancy with skill, dedication and fiscal sagacity, the result is that our debt is under control. The result is that our deficit is reasonable, and Ontario is now the only province left in Canada with a triple-A credit rating, rated by Moody's Investors Service in the United States.

The thrust of the speech from the throne is the same as the thrust of the unanimous report from all three parties of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs as to what it recommended should be in the budget: namely, that the primary goal of government today should be to repair the damaged infrastructure of the economy, by investing in primary, secondary or post-secondary education, most particularly in research areas; through working to maintain full employment and addressing the pockets of unemployment in the north; through improving our quality of life by addressing the availability of and carrying out the initiatives of the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney).

One of the concerns which this speech addressed and which this member applauds is the development of a community-based health care system emphasizing prevention of illness and promotion of healthy living. In the last 10 years, health care has jumped from 27 per cent to 32 per cent of the provincial budget. We have to address that fact.

In the short term, that fact can be addressed with sufficient funding and institutional management incentives. This is an example of a clear rebuilding of the infrastructure, and I am reminded of the situation in my community where two hospitals laboured for years not having enough funds to operate efficiently. Much time was wasted with bureaucratic wrangling, and today with an improved funding base and with added funding available to them, there is new excitement in both our hospitals.

In an attempt to make things work efficiently with this assistance, for example, the Kitchener-Waterloo Hospital is now using paper plates in the cafeteria where it used to use china. Every worker in the hospital has been asked to participate in money-saving ideas, and this is admirable. It is also necessary in the long run to seek viable well-care alternatives in the community, and this too requires funding in the long run.

If I may turn to the area of mental health, we have virtually emptied our mental hospitals, and we are just beginning to show real community support for our mentally ill. Currently, community health care programs receive only six per cent of the mental health budget. I would like to see the government aiming at increasing this percentage.

Some states in the United States have reallocated funds from hospital to community programs. It obviously fits that when we have so many mental patients out of the hospital, more money should be going into these community programs. It should be done in a planned and deliberate manner. Wisconsin is a good example of a way in which that has been done, and we could learn from their experience.

In order to enjoy Ontario's buoyant economy fully, continuing housing shortages, which go hand in hand with buoyancy, must be overcome. I come from an area not dissimilar to that of the member who spoke previously, where the economy is booming, but there is a low vacancy rate in housing and that, in fact, creates an acute problem.

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The initiatives of the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling), as outlined in the speech from the throne, deserve active support from this Legislature. Since coming to office, this government has envisioned affordable, quality housing for all Ontarians and the throne speech initiatives, like a housing-first policy, are designed to meet this future head on.

In my area, I have seen how government-supported private sector initiatives have provided new housing opportunities for families. We have had a lot of them. We appreciate them. More is needed. I am confident the throne speech is the proper blueprint for the future of housing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to endorse the proposal put forward by my colleague the Minister of Housing to the effect that boarders in commercially-oriented units receive the same rights as tenants have under the Landlord and Tenant Act. This is the civil thing to do, as boarders have little protection at the

moment and few rights in the face of wrongful eviction by an owner. I have known people to be ordered out of their residence with no recourse, in cases where the Landlord and Tenant Act does not apply to them. I am confident this House will see the justice of such a proposal once it is brought forth.

Another area in which the infrastructure needs to be strengthened is intercity transportation. I wish to compliment the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton). It was a real delight to see him back in the House today. The minister has been sensitive and responsive in our community in endorsing a new transit terminal. This intermodal terminal will serve not only the residents of Kitchener-Waterloo, but will also be integrated with intercity bus and rail lines.

This brings me to a sensitive area, when we talk about the rail system, which is presently inadequate and is now facing further cutbacks by the federal government. A rapidly growing area such as Guelph, the Waterloo region and Stratford should not be abandoned, as Via Rail now seems to be doing. I would like to go further and suggest it might be an area GO Transit could move into, but I realize there could be serious problems there, in that the track belongs to the federal government and there would have to be a lot of co-operation.

Another matter crucial to the future of my region is the plan to develop new sources of water supply. By 1991, the Waterloo region is projected to suffer serious water shortages, and that year is only four years away. Current plans call for the development of a recharge aquifer in the Grand River, but it is apparent this plan is not sufficient to meet the needs of the booming region.

At this time, I wish to express my support for a study which would look again at a plan previously rejected, at the whole concept of a pipeline from one of the Great Lakes into our area. Five years ago, this concept was rejected as economically unfeasible and virtually impracticable. Estimates in 1982 predicted a minimum price tag of \$250 million, in comparison to a cost of about \$150 million for what we are calling the Grand River-Mannheim recharge project.

Times have changed. New technologies and new materials have been made for this pipeline proposal. It is now economically feasible and socially justifiable, and in the long run, over a long period of time, it is the case that it will eventually be cheaper. Roughly, in economic terms, the cost of the proposed pipeline has been reduced to somewhere in the general vicinity of

between \$147 million and \$200 million. Some would say this current amount is too costly; but in the long term, I would argue, it is cheaper.

A pipeline allows for long-term industrial population. It allows for population expansion to be satisfied at a much grander rate than would be the case if we were to depend on aquifers; aquifers basically being, as I understand it, taking the water we use, pumping it back into the water table in the area and then repurifying it and using it again.

It strikes me that a pipeline provides much more flexibility. Other areas in the province might well be serviced by it, including Brantford, Guelph or Stratford, but an aquifer project, if set up for the region of Waterloo, cannot go beyond the Waterloo region.

Over the next 50 years, we require a large, secure, stable supply of water to meet these growing needs. A pipeline responds to these needs. Infrastructure for this project—a treatment plant, pumping stations and so on—can be completed within a 12-month to 18-month period, while the laying down of pipe could all occur within one summer season; a pipeline could easily be achieved by the critical 1991 target date from any one of Lake Erie, Lake Huron or Georgian Bay.

I am concerned as well about a comparative evaluation of drinking water sources which has been prepared by CanTox Inc., consultants in technology, which says, among other things—I am reading from page 9—“With the exception of polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, none of the chemicals identified at any of these sites was at levels of concern regarding public health and safety.”

The exception is there, and the indication is there that any one of the Great Lakes might be a safer source of water supply than would an aquifer coming from the ground water in our area, which of course is fed by, among other things, the runoff of fertilizer and detergent from nearby farm land.

Despite its initial cost, the proposed pipeline eventually would run at a more efficient rate than the current proposal. Concerns about initial heavy industrial costs to taxpayers can therefore, I would suggest, be allayed. I am simply saying, let us look into the feasibility of this before we reject it out of hand.

These are a few of the examples of some of the needs that I would suggest should be looked at a little more closely in addressing the rebuilding of our provincial infrastructure. I hope it can be done, as the standing committee on finance and

economic affairs unanimously hopes, in a manner that approaches balancing total current revenues with total current expenditures.

It was interesting when our committee was meeting that we had no particular briefs—and we certainly heard from a number of economists and a number of chambers of commerce and the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto—for across-the-board tax cuts. We had concern expressed for the size of the deficit. We had concern expressed in greater volume for the need to redress the infrastructure, but there was no suggestion from any source that there be across-the-board tax cuts. That idea is the figment of the imagination of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) alone. If there is an issue in this regard, I suggest it is not the case that a tax cut should be considered.

There has been a lot of suggestion, particularly from the third party, to the effect that we are on a bent towards an election. The Premier has rather humbly acknowledged that our government is here, to some extent, by accident. With the exception of Arthur Meighen in 1926, whose government lasted only a few weeks, I know of no other government in Canadian history that has governed without first being elected. I can understand the concern of the members opposite that surely the time is fast approaching when it may be appropriate to ask the electorate whether it endorses the initiatives of this government, whether it endorses this new agenda.

I understand this clamouring from members opposite in view of the fact that we were not formally elected and came into power essentially by accident. A consultation with the electorate must soon be in order so that we can clear the way, have a mandate and carry forward with this new agenda.

1640

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I would first like to comment on the observations of the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke) about the Conservative members wasting time in debate by taking too much time in their individual talks. The member should be aware that eight days are allocated for the throne speech debate, whether two, five or 20 members use it up.

I would also like to thank the member for Kitchener, the chairman of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, for inviting me a few months ago to attend a meeting in Washington with his finance committee. He offered me the position of one of the Liberal members who could not attend. I was very

interested in attending but felt that I could not join the Liberal caucus even for a short interval.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise in response to the speech from the throne. I intend, as always, to be fair in my comments, to offer credit where it is deserved, to be critical where necessary but in a constructive way, and to express my concerns in areas where I feel the government is not doing enough or indeed is doing the wrong thing. Unfortunately, there are many of both. Any government that makes 157 promises in 30 different areas is either very inexperienced or has no intention of keeping its promises. I can attest to their inexperience but only time will tell if they are honest.

I will work my way through the 49 pages of this magnificent document of promises and comment on some that have aroused my interest. I will start with tourism on page 3. It states in the speech from the throne, "We must compete by attracting new investment and more visitors." What is the government doing to attract new visitors? I would like to read from a letter I received from a constituent who just returned from a trip to Washington:

"We have heard quite a lot recently about the Ontario government's initiatives to promote the tourist industry in this province: Ontario Incredible! Incredible it was on Sunday, May 3, upon a return from a visit south of the border via the Ambassador Bridge between Detroit and Windsor. After crossing the border into Canada some time in the early afternoon, we were greeted first of all by nonfunctioning traffic lights along the short stretch of Highway 3 which runs from the bridge to Highway 401. Nowhere in sight was there a police officer to assist in the confusion which certainly occurs in such circumstance.

"We stopped for lunch at the first service centre on Highway 401, just past Tilbury, and were we American tourists entering Canada, we most certainly would have been tempted to turn around and go back home. The condition of the restaurant, the standard of service, the type and quality of food, the lack of cleanliness, the unfriendly and almost hostile attitude of the waitress made us ashamed, and we were embarrassed citizens of this province and country. After waiting for quite some time to be served, we finally gave up and decided to try the next service centre.

"Our experience there proved equally unpleasant. The restaurant was in the process of being renovated to accommodate a Wendy's and Tim Horton doughnut shop. The food being offered

was meagre and the atmosphere bleak and uninviting."

This is an example of the type of welcome Ontario is offering to its American visitors who spend millions of dollars a year in our province and country. It is truly incredible. To make it even more incredible is the government's major tourism thrust to date, namely, the promised toilets along the 401. These were announced in last year's throne speech and still are not completed, but the Premier did make a helpful suggestion to our new tourists, "Take an airsickness bag with you in the meantime." This is truly incredible.

This would be a golden opportunity for the government to do something, something big and earth-shattering, like building some world-class service centres and installing some state-of-the-art toilets.

I have had many constituents express concern about the speech pathologists and many other social and health services that are provided in our cities but not in rural Ontario. This is in relation to the promise on page 4: "We will extend the hand of opportunity and social justice to all Ontarians, and assist those who are unable to grasp it on their own.

"We will develop a system of flexible, community-based programs and services to respond to changing social and economic needs. We recognize that individuals, neighbourhoods and communities best know their own needs, and we will involve them in planning and choosing the services they require.

"Programs and services will be made available on a decentralized basis—close at hand and easy to find."

I fully support that concept. I take this offer of the government to extend the hand of opportunity and social justice to all Ontarians and call on it to assist my constituents in acquiring the services they require, close at hand and easy to find.

I would like to move on to the deficit. "We will seek to attain these goals in a fiscally responsible manner, because the people of Ontario wish to leave their children with the flexibility they will need to meet the challenges of tomorrow."

It is in the throne speech. I would hope by that statement that the government intends to balance the budget and not leave a legacy of debt for our children to inherit. Surely we should pay our own debts. Former Prime Minister of Britain Harold Macmillan said, "History is apt to judge harshly those who sacrifice tomorrow for today."

I would like to move on to the next paragraph on the same page. "In these and all matters my

government is mindful of the fact that it is the servant of the people. We will continue to provide government that is...open and fair.

"That is commendable. I would like to read an editorial in the Toronto Star dated April 15. The headline reads, "Paying for Access."

"This evening, Premier David Peterson and several of his cabinet colleagues are scheduled to rub elbows with some 200 businessmen at a cocktail party at the Ontario Club in Commerce Court South.

"That sounds relatively harmless, but there's a catch: the businessmen have paid \$200 each for the privilege of access to the Premier and other ministers and the chance to tell them their 'thoughts and concerns,' as the invitation says. For \$1,000, you may join an exclusive club that gets to meet regularly with Peterson and his cabinet and discuss government policy."

The editorial also says, "Of course, if you wanted to talk to your local MP or MPP and his secretary said you would first have to contribute to his campaign fund, you might be miffed. But increasingly, it seems, that's the way political fund-raising is done these days. You have a much better chance of catching a politician's ear if you first fill his coffers."

Ms. E. J. Smith: That is what you guys used to do. It is not that way any more.

Mr. Pope: No, you have refined it to a real art.

Ms. E. J. Smith: It is not done that way, I can tell you that.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: The Liberals are the experts in fund-raising; I am not sure how it is done. It is not done that way in my party. I very much resent the fact that the Premier continuously makes promises of an open and fair government and then charges \$1,000 for the privilege of talking to him. He belittles the political process and demeans the integrity of MPPs who serve all their constituents regardless of their political stripe or purse.

1650

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: The member for Wellington-Dufferin-Peel is waiting.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I would like to refer now to the section dealing with excellence in education. It says: "We will soon announce details of a major new capital funding program to alleviate overcrowded classrooms and modernize our education facilities...It will help ensure that people in all parts of the province have equal access to quality education, while improving our ability to meet community needs."

There is an article in the Guelph Mercury of May 1: "Wellington Denied Grants. The chairman of the board, Bill Lawless, is quite upset. Despite a \$179-million boost for building new schools across the province, the Wellington County Board of Education has been snubbed. 'We are not on the list,' chairman of the board Bill Lawless said Thursday, 'the money has been allocated and we are not getting any of it. To say the least, I am not happy.'"

Where is the government commitment to ensure equal access to quality education to all parts of this province? Are they breaking their promises already or are they playing politics?

Dealing further with education, how does one accept the fact that this government would accept the very high drop-out rate in Ontario and work towards reducing it by one third within the next five years? That is certainly setting a fine example of excellence in governing. Aim so low that you just may achieve your goal. Surely our young people deserve better. A more determined government would have set its goal at 100 per cent. Even if it is not attainable, it should at least work towards that goal.

One of my constituents, Eric Holmes, the vice-principal of Erin District High School has made some excellent suggestions to combat this very serious problem of school drop-outs. Mr. Holmes says: "There is no doubt that many young people rank their job—'Where they pay me'—well above school where they get 'hassled for no money.' It is a sad situation, and as vice-principal I see lots of it."

He goes on to say: "Let us encourage our politicians, our parents and our public to look at the attitudes which are being carelessly inculcated in the young. Let us help them to make decisions to protect our young people in the interests of giving them the time and the opportunities to become the best that each of them can be."

I fully support this type of concept and feel that we all have an obligation to do what we can to encourage our young people to stay in school.

On a personal note, I would like to express my disappointment with the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway). He is not here at this time, but I see his parliamentary assistant is arriving. Maybe he can convey my disappointment to the minister. I am disappointed with him for his actions regarding the announcement of \$3 million for a new school in the town of Shelburne.

I am naturally not disappointed with the funding; I support that and commend him for granting the town of Shelburne the funding.

However, as the member who has represented Shelburne for more than 11 years, I do resent the fact that the minister did not even have the common courtesy to inform me that the grant was coming through. The announcement was made by the local Liberal candidate and the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan), the closest Liberal member. I very much feel they are playing politics with taxpayers' dollars.

I will carry on with a few more brief comments. In the throne speech, dealing with nursing homes and seniors, it says, "My government will provide additional funding to ensure the necessary staff and facilities to improve the quality of life of nursing home residents." Further, "We will strive to ensure that seniors receiving institutional care are able to enjoy the same level of dignity as those living independently in the community."

I fully accept both those comments and support them. I encourage the government to do more to ensure that these promises are kept and that this becomes a reality in all our nursing homes. The government must upgrade its inspection system and closely monitor all homes to safeguard the rights of our senior citizens receiving institutional care, so they may indeed live in dignity and comfort.

I am being very helpful to the government by supporting these initiatives.

We move on to the promotion of healthy living. The throne speech says, "We will act to encourage moderation in alcohol consumption." That sounds pretty good until we move on to page 27. It reads: "My government will also respond to consumer needs by ensuring that our laws reflect contemporary social attitudes. We will update the regulations governing the distribution and consumption of alcoholic beverages."

"The government is going to increase the hours of sale, make booze more available, encourage more sale of alcohol and at the same time promote a healthier lifestyle. The government wants it both ways and it does not work that way. This government does not sit on a fence; it stands four-square on both sides of it. With 157 promises, I guess it is hard not to make conflicting promises, especially if you do not intend to follow through with most of them anyway."

Regarding a safe environment, "We will provide enriched support to help municipalities maintain and rehabilitate sewage and water distribution systems...funds will be provided for projects such as sewage systems improvements, sewer separation.... Additional assistance will

also be given to larger municipalities to finance water and sewage projects of major environmental significance."

The government again makes promises that it does not intend to live up to, the promise to provide enriched support for municipalities that require sewage treatment facilities. I have three municipalities that have been trying to get assistance for the past several months. I have not been able to get any support from the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), except that he will talk to them.

The town of Fergus sent a letter I just received today. It is addressed to the Minister of the Environment and pertains to sewage system expansion. It reads:

"It was with surprise and regret that this municipality received your ministry's letter dated April 24, 1987. The situation which we are now faced with will be nothing short of devastating to our prospects for future growth. This municipality spent considerable time, effort and money to promote residential, industrial and commercial growth, and without expansion to the treatment facility for this municipality, future growth is seriously affected. Although we accept that our present system is overloaded, we also realize that all of our efforts over the years have been in vain if we cannot expand the sewage system due to lack of funding support from your ministry."

Why promise in the throne speech to provide money to support municipalities and then refuse to support them? It does not make sense. The government promised to supply more money for larger municipalities. What about rural Ontario and the small towns? They need equal consideration. They have the same problems as in the cities. Surely the minister can respond to the needs of the people who have made requests in the past before making promises to other people for the future.

Further on the safe environment, on page 25 of the throne speech: "We will introduce a new comprehensive waste management funding program, with a strong long-term emphasis on recycling. The program will support municipal initiatives to upgrade existing landfill sites and develop alternatives, and establish state-of-the-art waste management facilities."

The Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) should be interested in this because I have been pleading with him to support an energy-from-waste facility in the city of Guelph to solve the waste problems of both the city and the county of Wellington. The minister has been very support-

ive in his initiatives and has agreed to work with the county. Unfortunately, the Minister of the Environment does not share the same compassion or understanding of the problems of the people.

1700

It goes on to say, "My government will encourage co-operative efforts by industry, university and government researchers to ensure the rapid development, diffusion and application of new technologies for pollution control." Surely this will fall into the Minister of Energy's category. May I count on the facility in the next couple of weeks?

I have a large number of constituents in the little hamlet of Alma in the township of Peel who are very concerned. They are under pressure to accept a waste disposal site for the county of Wellington and the city of Guelph. It will mean hundreds of tons of garbage being dumped in their area, and they are very concerned about the environmental consequences of it. I would think that when the Minister of the Environment promises a safe environment, he would also take into account the concerns of these people and not impose a sanitary landfill site on a very sensitive environmental area.

I now will move on to renewed transportation infrastructure. The speech promises that funds will be provided for the rehabilitation of provincial highways and roads. I hope a fair and reasonable share of these funds will be allocated to my riding and not used for partisan political motives by this government. I receive many resolutions from my municipal councils requesting funding for highways, roads and bridges. I received a resolution from the township of Minto in the county of Wellington just last Thursday.

The resolution reads: "Be it resolved that the council of the township of Minto endorses the Ontario Good Roads Association's submission to the government of Ontario regarding increased funding for road maintenance and construction to maintain and upgrade the road system in the province of Ontario." It goes on to say that the council is spending \$180,000 of 100 per cent Minto taxpayers' money because the province has fallen behind in its responsibility to assist it in this regard.

Why is the government promising more money to rehabilitate the highways and roads and not looking after the commitments it has made? Again, it is promising something for the future. Why does it not live up to its commitments in the past?

I move on to the tourist area. "A World-Class Tourist Destination: Tourism is a key source of employment and revenue for the Ontario economy. It is estimated that tourism accounts directly and indirectly for at least nine per cent of total employment in the province and six per cent of gross provincial product."

I support any government initiative to increase the revenue from tourism. This government could start by following my advice and cleaning up the service centres on our major highways and providing comfortable, well-informed tourist information centres.

I would again like to venture forth in promoting the Ontario farm vacation program. This is a tourist program I have promoted for many years, certainly during my 12 years as a member of this Legislature. The Speaker may even remember some of my speeches.

The problem with the farm vacation program is that it is being administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. The Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) has enough problems with the financial problems in the agricultural community without becoming involved in the tourist area. It has always been my contention that this program should be in the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation. The Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) has always shown a lot of interest in this program and I would hope the government would give consideration to transferring the farm vacation program to that ministry.

Seven years ago, we had approximately 30 members. The number now has increased to 90. It is my feeling this number could be increased to 300, 400 or 500 with very little effort because there is a need for this type of modest accommodation. When one considers the price of accommodation at the Sutton Place Hotel, which is close to \$200 for two people, many tourists will not venture into Ontario because they simply cannot afford it. If we had more bed-and-breakfast and boarding homes, and more farm vacation homes, we would encourage more people to travel to this province. It is something that deserves the attention of all members of the Legislature, promoting it actively and improving the program. Ninety is a good number, but we could have far more and be beneficial to the tourist industry and the province, especially to the Treasury.

I have only a few more comments. One is on agriculture. I am a bit disappointed with the government's initiative in this. The speech from the throne reads, "A Strengthened Agriculture

Sector." While it talked about strengthening the sector, it devoted less than one page in a 49-page document to agriculture.

The speech from the throne reads, "Improvements will be made in the farm tax reduction program." So it should make improvements. I thank my colleague the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock) who moved a resolution on January 15, which I seconded, that read as follows, "That in the opinion of this House, the Minister of Agriculture and Food in conjunction with the Minister of Revenue should immediately move to increase the farm property tax rebate from 60 per cent to 70 per cent."

I hope the government is moving in that direction. It has promised improvements. It received the unanimous support of all members of the House. It is one of the most enriched programs in agriculture for farmers. It amounts to well more than \$100 million a year.

The province's agricultural sector needs help in many areas. On top of the list is financial assistance. To survive the drafting measures of the United States farm bill, and the European Community, it is estimated that Americans will spend more than \$20 billion in support of their farm program. Europe is credited with direct and indirect subsidization programs to agriculture in excess of \$60 billion. Our farms need our financial support now.

Many other problems in rural Ontario could be dealt with by a reasonable and understanding government, such as land severances. Everyone should be supportive of preserving top quality agricultural land. If they are, then they should be supportive of preserving family farms. If we preserve the farmers, they will preserve the land. Let us keep our priorities in order. Many of my constituents in municipalities in the rural areas want the right to make reasonable and sensible land severances, acceptable to the local and county authorities but not subject to control by Queen's Park bureaucrats.

These decisions can and should be made at the local level by knowledgeable people who know the land and the community. I strongly support this concept of local autonomy. I quote from the speech from the throne, "We"—the government—"recognize that individuals, neighbourhoods, and communities best know their own needs, and we will involve them in planning and choosing the services they require." The same thing should apply to land severances and the use of the land.

Further on agriculture, a few minutes ago I mentioned the benefits of a viable farm vacation program to our farmers. I now would like to

touch briefly on one of the most important initiatives I have taken as a member of this Legislature and, several years earlier, at the municipal level.

On Thursday, November 28, 1985, we debated in this House the resolution I had the privilege to move, a resolution that received the unanimous support of all members in this Legislature that day. The resolution reads as follows: "That in the opinion of this House, recognizing the very serious limitations based on our smaller rural municipalities in their ability to attract industrial growth, the government of Ontario should develop and implement an industrial strategy that would provide these municipalities with the much-needed expertise and financial resources necessary to enhance their position in this competitive field."

1710

For more than 20 years, I have fought for industrial and commercial growth in rural Ontario; growth in our small towns, villages and townships; growth that would provide our people with job opportunities at home; growth that would provide off-farm income close to home to help retain that farm, and growth that would keep the social fabric of our communities intact and support our schools, churches, arenas—our way of life.

All growth does not have to centre in Metro. I applaud the government for its decision to move the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to Wellington county. This is a very wise decision to make. Guelph and Wellington county are the centre of the agricultural community for Ontario. Wellington happens to be my new riding, and I support that initiative.

Mr. Barlow: Close at hand. That is right, very good; if it ever gets moved, if it ever gets there.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: I think even the member for Cambridge would appreciate the fact that he will have the Ministry of Agriculture and Food close at hand. Over the next few years, most of the people working in this ministry will be from rural Ontario, and this will give a better perspective to a rural way of life, which is so important to the survival of our family farms.

I am sure the member for Oshawa will also appreciate the fact that the Ministry of Revenue moved to Oshawa.

Interjection.

Mr. J. M. Johnson: He says "so-so."

We move on to greater opportunity for women. With six grandchildren—five grand-

daughters and one grandson—I strongly support this initiative.

We move on to access to justice, on page 47. The government talks about fundamental principles of justice. I would like to make reference to a recent questionnaire I mailed out. The response was excellent—one of the best returns ever—2,426 responses.

I asked two questions relating to our justice system. First, "In your opinion, does our existing justice system deal appropriately with convicted criminals?" In response, 6.4 per cent said yes, 85 per cent said no, and the rest did not know. Only 156 respondents were satisfied with our present judicial system's dealings with convicted criminals, while 2,063 were not satisfied.

The second question I asked on the same topic was, "Should victims of crime be given financial compensation and restitution for injury and loss resulting from the crime?" Of the respondents, 73.2 per cent said yes, 11.1 per cent said no, and 15.7 per cent were undecided or did not respond. Only 269 said no, but 1,777 said yes, victims of crimes need more consideration.

I fully support the views of my constituents on both these issues and will inform both the federal and provincial Attorneys General of my constituents' views.

In winding up, on the last page, page 49, it states, "We will modernize and strengthen this province's physical infrastructures, including our schools, hospitals and roads, to make them serve the long-term interests of the people of Ontario."

I certainly support that initiative and once again warn this Liberal government not to play politics with the taxpayers' own dollars, penalizing some areas of the province to reward others. This government has pledged to be fair to all. Let them keep their word or pay the ultimate price for the failure to do so.

The voters in each riding will determine whether they have received their fair return on their tax dollars. Let this government have no illusions of buying votes with threats or promises, with the many millions of dollars this government has set aside. It is not the Liberal government's money; it belongs to the public. We were all elected to serve with honour, fairness and integrity. Let this government do so.

My last comments deal with the last paragraph, "We will continue to help the people of this province prepare for the 21st century." I find it is nice to prepare for the future—in fact, it is even wise—but surely this government intends to do something now, something today and tomor-

row, and surely many constructive things over the next 13 years, not just plan for the 21st century.

George McLaughlin, chairman of the Ontario Farm Debt Review Board, says about one Ontario farmer in five will leave the land during the next five years. That is about 10,000 farm families. That is 10,000 farm operations closed, 10,000 farm homes lost and 10,000 farm families forced to find new employment, new homes and a new way of life. I personally cannot accept this government or this Legislature allowing such a thing to happen.

The problems go far beyond Ontario's borders. In fact, world events have caused these problems. It is incumbent upon all legislators to work together to try to alleviate some of the damage created by these world economic problems in the agricultural sector. We have to do it today, not next year or into the 21st century. This is just one example of many that needs attention today, not tomorrow.

I call upon this government to set aside its lust for power—did the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) hear that?—and start today to deal with the many social and economic problems that face our great province at this time. Both opposition parties have stated their desire to move ahead with meaningful legislation. Let this so-called world-class Liberal government do likewise. As our beloved Lieutenant Governor said in closing, "May Divine Providence attend your deliberations."

Ms. Bryden: I am pleased to participate in the throne speech debate. I would like to take the opportunity to compliment you, Mr. Speaker, on the performance of your duties as Speaker since the change of government. You have earned the respect of all members of the House by your even-handed conduct of the business of the House.

The throne speech we are discussing is a very great disappointment to me. Never has the speech touched so many bases without scoring a run. There are no concrete proposals for adequate layoff protection for workers affected by plant closures. In fact, all the speech says about this is on page 38, "Training support will be provided for laid-off older workers." How effective that will be in looking after the people at General Electric who now are being laid off and the rubber workers at the Goodyear plant in Etobicoke, I do not know.

There are no concrete proposals for a fairer tax system. In fact, all the speech says is, on page 40, "My government awaits with interest the intro-

duction of tax reform measures by the federal government." They apparently have no initiatives of their own to close loopholes and make the whole tax system fairer.

Nor are there any details in the section headed "Greater Independence for the Physically Disabled." In particular, there is no promise of employment equity legislation to help them find jobs.

The same is true of the section headed "Greater Independence for Seniors." Why is there no mention of an increase in the property tax credit that seniors rely on to help them pay their municipal and school taxes when they stay in their own homes?

Nor is there any promise to index pensions or workers' compensation payments. Inflation can continue to erode these measures to the point where recipients may be reduced to poverty level.

1720

I could go on and mention many other areas where the throne speech offers no hope of a better life for working people, retired people, disabled people and people needing better health care. However, in the time I have at my disposal I would like to zero in on three particular problems where urgent action is needed.

First, dental care for seniors. Last week I visited a group of residents at a senior citizens' apartment in my riding. Almost all of them had serious dental problems. Some had not been able to get adequate preventive dental care when growing up. Others had been unable to afford it during their working life and when they were raising their families. Now their quality of life and nutrition is gravely affected by lack of adequate dentures. Their health is also seriously affected. They find the cost of obtaining dentures is beyond their means. The emergency services provided through the welfare department or the dental school are not adequate for their needs, and they often do not qualify for them anyway.

While I commend the Toronto health department for its efforts to assist them with dental problems and to provide them with preventive care if they live in a seniors' building or a geriatric home, they have still not met the need to provide these seniors with the funds to obtain the dentures they need. All the health department has been able to do so far is develop a list of dentists who will accept reduced fees from seniors who are referred to them through the Toronto health department's list. While this is helpful, it really does not solve their problems, and most of them

are living on a tea-and-toast syndrome because they cannot chew more solid foods.

In fact, the Toronto health department recently did a survey of dental health for seniors in the city of Toronto. They found that more than half the 75,000 seniors had not seen a dentist in five years, even though more than 90 per cent had some form of gum disease.

Dr. Jack Lee, dental services adviser for the city of Toronto, said, "They are just not getting the proper dental care...we've seen a tea-and-toast syndrome where seniors eat only soft foods because their teeth and gums hurt so much. It's unfortunate because eating nutritional foods would improve their overall health."

The slogan of the health department's promotional campaign was that teeth are "Good For Life." It envisages good health and long life.

Dental care for seniors must become part of Ontario health insurance plan funding. It must be provided through the OHIP services. They should not have to go to hospitals simply for oral surgery to remove their teeth. The same might be said about eyeglasses and magnifying glasses for seniors. These are basic needs for most seniors and should also be covered by OHIP.

The second area I want to draw attention to is the need for the government to put more action behind its words, on page 20 of the throne speech, about community health centres. It says, "We will work towards the creation of a widely accessible, community-based health care system that emphasizes the maintenance of good health and the adoption of healthy living habits."

That sentence could have been from a quote by the Honourable Larry Grossman when he was Minister of Health back in 1982-83. Five years ago the Conservative government was saying the same thing about promoting community health centres, but in those five years the growth of community health centres has been almost minimal. A very small part of the health budget is devoted to helping develop community health centres and health service organizations, yet these kinds of organizations can reduce the cost of the delivery of health services and encourage preventive medicine.

They can also help us move away from the fee-for-service health care system. It is the best way to reduce health care costs, because it has been demonstrated that patients using this kind of health organization go to hospital less frequently, stay in hospital for shorter times, have opportunities to get special nutritional education, become part of geriatric programs to improve their lives

and can also have better well-baby programs and more lifestyle health education.

If this part of the throne speech is to be anything more than a pious wish, we expect to see a beefing-up of the branch in the Ministry of Health which assists physicians and community groups to develop these kinds of health service organizations. We expect to see startup grants and help in developing community boards. With community boards, the people who use the health services can have a voice in the kind of services available, and that is the kind of health delivery we should be working towards.

The third area I want to zero in on is the whole question of the government's failure to face up to the problem of the lack of accountability of boards and commissions. Local citizens in my riding are finding that more and more of the decisions about their neighbourhoods and zoning in their commercial and residential areas are being taken out of their hands by the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Board and the Ontario Racing Commission.

When the government changed two years ago, many people hoped there would be a more open government and more willingness to listen to residents' concerns. Unfortunately, nothing much has changed. The Liberal cabinet has simply continued with the OMB it inherited from the previous government, and while the Liberal government did appoint all the present members of the Ontario Racing Commission and the LLBO, the change in personnel has not resulted in any significant change in policy or attitude. If anything, the Ontario Racing Commission is even more arbitrary and unresponsive than before, as indicated by its decisions on Sunday racing.

The OMB has been approving undesirable developments such as the one at 2365 and 2371 Queen Street East over the objections of both residents and their elected provincial and municipal representatives. These developments are too large or the height is too great to fit in with the present streetscape in that area, the present parking facilities and the general nature of that neighbourhood.

1730

The LLBO does hold public hearings, but it advertises them in local newspapers under the meaningless heading of "Notice of a Public Meeting" and does not list them according to the geographical region. So one has to search through the whole list to find applications affecting one's neighbourhood.

While the LLBO does listen to residents who come down to speak to it, the hearings are practically all held at its offices on Lakeshore Boulevard rather than anywhere in the neighbourhoods they are affecting. They are almost always held during working hours, when residents find it difficult to get there. Of course, the applicants often come with high-priced lawyers and the residents have to rely on their own resources. Usually they cannot afford a lawyer for a single hearing.

What is more, the LLBO continues to license patios very close to residences and allows transfers of licences without public hearings unless there is a 25 per cent increase in the number of seats being requested. In those ways, they are not responding to the feelings of the residents in the area. They should consider to a greater extent the effect of those sorts of changes on the community.

These boards and commissions are still appointed by the government in power without any input by citizens. There is no standard procedure for the government to seek nominations from the public nor are there any criteria as to whether the various interests affected by the decision should have representation on the boards. There is no public representation on the racetrack board outside of the chairman, who is not a member of the horse-racing fraternity; all the other members are members of that fraternity or that business.

The standing committee on procedural affairs has recommended that appointments to such boards and commissions should be subject to nomination from the public and that the appointments made should be sent to the Legislature for legislative review. In that way we would perhaps democratize those boards and give the public more of an opportunity to have its views heard, rather than just those of the industries affected.

Once these boards are appointed, and they are often appointed for periods of three years or more, the public has no way to make them answerable to it, if they do not like the decisions that are being made. The only way their method of operation can be changed is for the government to amend the law under which they operate. It has not taken that course in regard to any of these particular boards and commissions that I am discussing nor, to my knowledge, has it changed many other boards since it came to power.

The only recourse that citizens have, if they do not like the decisions of those boards, is to go to judicial review and to challenge whether the boards are operating under the legislation that

governs them. As many members know, the residents around the Greenwood Race Track affected by the decisions on Sunday racing did go to judicial review. They discussed the matter with the Attorney General, who told them that was a recourse they had.

They have found that they were not able to convince the court that the mandate of the Ontario Racing Commission required it either to listen to the residents or to take their concerns into consideration. That may be a defect in the legislation, but it certainly was no recourse to the residents because they had to go to court in a David and Goliath position, and costs were awarded to the Ontario Racing Commission.

In effect, the residents who challenged the mandate of the Ontario Racing Commission by judicial review are paying the costs of the commission to defend itself. Of course, the commission has sources of revenue from its activities, whereas the residents have only their own resources.

It is really a David and Goliath situation when residents attempt to challenge these boards and commissions through judicial review. Unless there is intervener funding provided automatically for citizens' groups and the general public who wish to challenge the boards and commissions, there is really no equality of justice for them.

As the previous speaker mentioned, at page 47 of the throne speech there is the statement by the government: "Access to government goes hand in hand with access to justice. My government is committed to the fundamental principle that all citizens, regardless of their wealth or status, should have equal access to the justice system. Legal rights have meaning only if they can be exercised in a timely fashion."

Under the board and commission setup, very few residents who go to challenge in the courts the Ontario Municipal Board, the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario or the Ontario Racing Commission have equal access to judicial review. We are not going to solve the problem of citizens having any genuine input into decision-making by boards and commissions until the government changes the legislation under which these bodies operate. It must require that residents and applicants be given equal opportunities to be heard and that appointments to such bodies be subject to legislative review.

That is a very important area on which I am hoping we will have a change of policy from the government. There is no hint of it in the throne speech, except in its statement about access to justice.

I have introduced my own private member's bill to try to change the rules under which the Ontario Racing Commission operates, to require it not only to provide opportunities for public hearings on the decisions of the commission, but also to require the commission to take those concerns into consideration.

My private member's bill also calls for a change in the composition of the Ontario Racing Commission so that it ceases to be a completely one-sided board representing only the horse-racing industry. My bill would require that three representatives of people who live in the vicinity of racetracks should be added to the commission. It might be even better to have equal representation from the industry and from people who live in the vicinity of racetracks.

1740

The only way to effect this change quickly is for the government to adopt my bill or to bring in its own. The Sunday racing situation is causing very great traffic chaos and neighbourhood disruption in my area. The people in the vicinity of the racetrack used to be able to have their friends and relatives over on Sundays without fear of a tow-away zone, but now the tow-away zone operates seven days a week and one-hour parking is the maximum allowed or you are subject to tow-away. Most of them cannot have relatives and friends over unless they can find an alternative parking space for them somewhere in the area.

Also, the bringing of anywhere from 7,000 to 10,000 extra racing fans into the area on Sundays means that the transportation facilities bringing people into the other recreational facilities, or the roads for people coming to use the beaches, the boardwalk, the yacht clubs, all the recreational facilities along the eastern beaches, are being shortchanged as far as access goes.

In many cases, the parking lots for the Woodbine bathing beach are taken up by racetrack fans before the bathers get there, because the races often start at 1:30 and people start coming about 12. Any on-street parking is fully occupied by racetrack fans long before the people who enjoy picnicking along the beaches in the afternoon arrive.

The city has invested a lot of money in those recreational facilities, not just for the east-enders in my riding, but also for the whole city of people who like to go to the beach and lie on the sand or picnic beside the lake. Those people have been using the eastern beaches as their main recreational area for a long time and have had Sunday

free of other distracting competition for the parking spaces and the access to that area.

The city of Toronto is very interested in its investment in all these recreational facilities and would like to see they are preserved. So it has joined with the residents in supporting their desire that Sunday racing and intertrack betting at Greenwood Race Track be outlawed. That is a suggestion, that they would like the power to ban it, if the provincial government is not prepared to do it on its own.

The reason Greenwood Race Track should be treated differently from other racetracks is that no other racetrack is within the proximity of a large residential area similar to the one around Greenwood Race Track and, therefore, it is unique. It should have one day of respite from racetrack activity. Other racetracks are mainly out in the country and the activities there do not disrupt residential activities. They do not disrupt a lot of other recreational interests. They do not disrupt the major beaches and picnic places in the east end for thousands of Metro Toronto residents. So there is an argument for special treatment for Greenwood Race Track.

The provincial government could solve that problem by adopting my bill, which also bans Sunday racing at Greenwood Race Track only; or it could give the city of Toronto the power to regulate not only Sunday racing but also racing hours and days in the same way it regulates service station hours and days. Then the city of Toronto would have control over all the questions of whether tow-away zones are needed and whether police are sufficient to enforce tow-away zones. If they felt this was beyond their resources, they would certainly be justified in banning certain days and hours of racing to protect their ability to protect the rights of citizens and the traffic patterns and the use of the other facilities in the Beaches.

The city is ready to take on the role, but it does not have the power. It needs provincial legislation to give it the power to regulate racetrack days and hours. I think it is perfectly reasonable to move quickly on that to prevent what may be a summer of chaos in the whole east end of Toronto.

When the summer crowds come in their great numbers in July and August, some inter-track betting will still be going on and in September and October there will be live racing. All these activities will clash with each other. If we want to avoid that, we can act before this session ends in the spring to restore at least that one day for

respite to the east-end residents and the users of east-end facilities.

On that note, I will conclude my speech. I hope the government will take into account the very great problems it is allowing the Ontario Racing Commission to cause in that area and do what it can to alleviate the problems.

Hon. Ms. Munro: I am very pleased to rise today as member for Hamilton Centre to speak on the throne speech, specifically on the effects the initiatives contained in the speech will have in the area of Hamilton-Wentworth.

I was happy to see that the Lieutenant Governor made reference to a great number of issues that will bear directly on Hamilton in the years ahead. The promise of new capital funding to alleviate overcrowding in school classrooms was a welcome one, as this has been a problem in Hamilton in recent years.

Programs that will reduce drop-out rates and that will introduce co-operative programs linking industry and education are also welcomed. The emphasis on basic learning skills and literacy build on the very foundation of Hamilton. I must mention that the Adult Basic Hotline from Hamilton was one of the agencies that spurred this government into looking at very clear-cut examples and models of networking in this very serious area. Likewise, Mohawk College of Applied Arts and Technology, McMaster University and various community groups have made significant inroads, especially in the area of computer literacy.

We in Hamilton have put a great priority on the establishment of post-secondary centres of excellence, so it was no surprise to any of us when McMaster University was chosen as a provincial centre for gerontological studies. This is the first such centre in Ontario and represents a landmark in the province's commitment to the care and welfare of our elderly, those people who have, indeed, helped to develop the great city of Hamilton.

I should say too that many agencies were there, present and accounted for, when the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne) sought participation from citizens of Hamilton.

In addition, the strengthening of the integrated homemaker's program, funds for more home support services and the promise of the establishment of nursing homes specifically geared towards diverse ethnic communities all represent significant measures in Hamilton, where we have a very large and active seniors community.

1750

We know that Hamilton will figure prominently in any plans of expanded home support services and we look forward to the challenge of becoming a major provincial centre for research and implementation of initiatives for the elderly.

Also of great importance in the speech from the throne is the direction the province will take in the areas of environment, industry and technology. Hamilton has long relied on heavy industry for economic viability, and while the city embodies a strong entrepreneurial spirit, the direction of the speech from the throne on revitalizing industry and stressing the importance of innovation and traditional industry is most important indeed.

I see the establishment of an industrial restructuring commissioner to be a vital necessity for Hamilton. As a city, we have suffered the trauma of plant closures in the past. We realize fully the distress and upheaval this can cause, and I am proud to be a part of a government that is helping to find solutions to deal with this situation.

It is my understanding that the industrial restructuring commissioner will be responsible for assisting workers in industries facing major layoffs and plant closures and to help explore creative solutions to save jobs. In cities such as Hamilton, and throughout the province, layoffs, plant relocations and closures are not merely economic or social irritants; they serve as traumatic and potentially devastating events that can cut to the core of the economic and social life of the community.

I think of the most recent plant closure, being Otis Elevator. I certainly look forward to seeing those workers benefit from this most innovative solution. The promise to provide for creative solutions to problems is welcome, but also much-needed news.

Hamilton is rightfully proud of its entrepreneurial spirit. We are known as the ambitious city, and there are many examples of this ambition: volunteerism, social services, education, heavy industry. But the heart of that ambition is found in Hamilton's small business community, the sector responsible for the creation of the majority of new jobs over the past decade.

The fact that our government recognizes that Ontario's future economic growth depends on this entrepreneurial spirit and the importance this government attaches to the growth of entrepreneurship are marvellous news to our city. I am very happy to see that the Premier's Council will

soon announce details concerning the establishment of a program of chairs of entrepreneurship for post-secondary institutions. We must ensure that the entrepreneurial spirit continues to thrive in Hamilton.

I was also delighted to see that the Lieutenant Governor made specific reference to the automotive and steel industries. Hamilton fully recognizes the historical importance of these industrial sectors to our future, and is pleased to see the government's pledge to reinforce the strength of these industries.

Hamilton takes a back seat to no community. We will embrace, indeed, all of the initiatives and will pull ourselves up by our bootstraps.

Our government's commitment to accelerating efforts to resolving the chronic housing problems in Ontario will also impact greatly on the Hamilton-Wentworth area. Like so many urban centres throughout this province, Hamilton has long felt the pressing need for more affordable housing. The commitment to provide more funds to expand the annual supply of assisted housing, the housing-first policy, measures to improve conditions for roomers, boarders and lodgers, and strengthened initiatives towards support of community living are all measures that will go a long way in easing the housing crunch in Hamilton-Wentworth. More important, however, they assure independence for each individual and allow him or her to chart his or her own course in life.

I want to refer specifically to the Ministry of Housing's trust and faith in Hamilton in the recent announcement of a fund which will go to the social planning council to hold seminars as we in Hamilton look at the significance of homelessness, especially approaching the Year of the Homeless.

Hamilton was built through the sweat and vision of working men and women. We will continue to attract people and businesses from other parts of Canada and Ontario, based on our work ethic and sense of community. The combined initiatives of the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Skills Development are therefore welcomed and are most important to the viability of our work force.

Protective legislation and programs referred to in the speech from the throne that will provide enhanced health and safety protection, broaden workers' legal rights, including the right to refuse to work in hazardous areas, amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act, amendments to the Employment Standards Act, revisions to the Pension Benefits Act and

opportunities for all people who wish to work, are indeed welcome.

To ensure the workers' opportunities to keep pace with technological change within existing sectors in industries and to meet the requirements of new services, high tech and small businesses, relevant training and apprenticeship and upgrading are absolutely essential. Nowhere is this more important than in the skilled trades, construction and industrial sectors. Apprenticeship and training programs must be formulated by a true partnership which involves the government, employers and employees; a partnership which draws on the skills and knowledge of colleges, universities, unions and businesses—all of this done with a clear recognition of economic planning, industrial and manpower needs, appropriate training environments and accredited or recognized training.

As the Minister of Citizenship and Culture and a member from one of the province's most diverse multicultural communities, I am especially pleased that the Lieutenant Governor has made specific references to the government introducing a comprehensive strategy on multiculturalism. Given the current patterns of immigration and our rapidly changing demographics, the decision by the government to move forward is further evidence of its commitment to the principles and ideals of a society whose values are rooted in fairness, equity and the provision of equal access and opportunity for all members of our society, regardless of cultural, religious and racial background.

I have had many opportunities, as have other members in this House, to discuss and explore with the province's multicultural communities the ways in which we as a government could best serve their needs and fulfil their expectations of us as politicians. I dare say the government's proposed thrust in this area will be well received by the province's more than 100 multicultural communities.

As honourable members here today might be aware, Ontario receives well over 40,000 newcomers each year, and in Hamilton we receive just over four per cent of that total. The contributions that newcomers have made to our city can be measured by the degree of cultural, social and economic activities that take place in Hamilton. In Hamilton, we are especially proud of our diversity. In fact, we view it as a source of great strength to our city.

As well, our pride in our own cultural industries, our individual artists, our sense of preservation of heritage and environment and our

deep and abiding love of archives, library and knowledge is also very self-evident as one moves through our community.

I consider the throne speech thrust in the areas of providing and maintaining a safe environment to be perhaps the most important initiative of all. We must ensure that Ontario continues to be a world leader in environmental protection. Anyone who has lived in Hamilton, a city that has long been a home to heavy industry, understands pollution as a major issue.

The throne speech shows our government has taken significant steps to deal with this very real problem. We as Hamiltonians look forward to future announcements from the Ministry of the Environment that are based on the promise to provide enriched support to help municipalities maintain and rehabilitate sewage and water distribution systems, to protect our beaches, lakes, rivers and water supplies.

We in Hamilton know our strength comes from our industries, but we also realize the need to contain harmful and unfortunate byproducts. We look forward to the new comprehensive waste management funding program with its emphasis on recycling, and we are grateful for the province's past commitment to the cleanup of the Windermere basin. We as a society cannot stress enough the importance of protecting our

environment, thereby protecting the future of our children and our children's children.

Hamilton, of course, will be reaching out in our vision of the future to attract more tourists, and we will be able to do it with a safe environment. Also, Hamilton will build on its reputation in the area of athletics and amateur sports and welcomes the initiatives of the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation.

I would like to move on to some of the—

The Deputy Speaker: There is another minute.

Hon. Ms. Munro: Okay. In the time left to me, I would like to touch briefly on some of the other initiatives.

We in Hamilton are very much aware of the rights of the physically disabled and of the developmentally handicapped and will ensure that the rights and needs of this particular group will be enshrined in all of the programs right across the government. Our emphasis on local community-based services is reflected not only in the participation of our programs but also in the action members will see coming from Hamilton-Wentworth.

I think I would like to finish tomorrow.

On motion by Ms. Munro, the debate was adjourned.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Thursday, May 14, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Thursday, May 14, 1987

The House met at 10 a.m.

Prayers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS LANDLORD AND TENANT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Reville: It is with a sense of some moment that I rise today to speak in the second-reading debate on my bill in respect of roomers, boarders and lodgers.

The Deputy Speaker: Would you please move the motion first?

Mr. Reville moved second reading of Bill 10, An Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of that for the windup.

Mr. Reville: As I was saying when I was interrupted by some procedural niceties, I am delighted to be speaking in this debate today.

It strikes me as particularly odd that one group of people in our society is denied the protection that all other members of society have; that is, of course, security of tenure. How could it be that a group of people, usually the most vulnerable people in our society, certainly the least well-off people in our society and therefore the most deserving of any breaks that are available to be had, should be left out in the cold, so to speak, by a Landlord and Tenant Act that does not recognize their right to security of tenure?

For those who are at all familiar with my history, it will not be surprising that my private member's bill should be on the subject of rooming houses and roomers in particular. In 1972, when I first became involved in community activism, I was working with roomers. I had recently founded the Neighbourhood Legal Services and our first set of clients was roomers in south St. Jamestown who were being threatened with massive evictions by the big speculator of that time, the Meridian Group.

Those who are familiar with the history of the St. George and St. David ridings, as they still are called but which will soon disappear, will know that in the 1960s and 1970s, the Meridian Group

bought up large numbers of existing buildings using a tactic that was appropriately called blockbusting. The main victims of this blockbusting attack were roomers. At that time, we were working to try to protect as many of the rooming houses as we could and we were grateful to be able to preserve 51 rooming houses in that community which were subsequently purchased by the city of Toronto and are continuing to be operated as rooming houses.

The regrettable fact is that those rooming houses may be the only rooming houses that are secure in this city and in cities such as Ottawa because in fact they are owned by a public body. What we are seeing happening more and more, and particularly in the recent speculative housing boom, is that rooming houses are the favourite target of speculators. The reason for that is not hard to fathom: it is easy for a vendor to guarantee vacant possession. Why should that be? Because the people who live in rooming houses are not protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act and it is not required for an owner to give them any notice at all, nor to allege any reasons why it should be that they should lose their home. That strikes me as an absolutely shocking situation.

Yesterday, down the street in district court, the tenants of 433 Ontario Street, a building in the new riding of St. George and St. David, were before His Honour Judge Webb pleading for their homes. Their house had been bought in January of this year for \$175,000. In March 1987, the same house was sold for \$225,000 and the vendor quite wrongly said, "You will have vacant possession." The vendor is going to get vacant possession because His Honour Judge Webb said, "The people who live at 433 Ontario Street are not tenants." Incredibly, they are licensees. Because they are not tenants, they are not protected as other tenants are from eviction without cause.

This is a pattern that has been repeated over and over again over the past number of years. When I started working with roomers in 1972, there were double the number of roomers in Ontario that there are today. The population of roomers has not been halved because there is not a demand for low-cost housing; on the contrary,

the demand for low-cost housing is increasing. Where are those roomers? They are on the street.

As the number of roomers goes down, the number of homeless goes up. If the members understand the way we supply affordable housing in this province, they will know that for every unit of affordable housing that is created you have to build four units of housing because the rent-geared-to-income portion is generally 25 per cent. Even under a 40 per cent rent-geared-to-income quota, you need 2.5 units for every one of those roomers who has been displaced. What would protect them? A simple amendment to the Landlord and Tenant Act.

1010

This was not an amazing new discovery I had made on April 29 when I introduced this bill for first reading. In fact, one can start back in 1974 with the verdict of the coroner's jury inquiring into the death of Isabelle McIntosh. That coroner's jury recommended that roomers should be protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act. That was in 1974. It is now 1987. In the ensuing 13 years, the number of prestigious task forces established at great cost to study this problem, and the number of housing studies and housing policy suggestions that have recommended roomers be included under the Landlord and Tenant Act, has grown into quite a pile.

In fact, I was able to discover 14 such documents dating back to 1974, including the verdicts of four coroners' juries. One will remember that one does not get a verdict of a coroner's jury unless one has a death. In each of those four verdicts, one of the top recommendations was, for God's sake, to bring roomers under the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Act and do it now. Thirteen years have elapsed and tens of thousands of roomers have been put out on the street or have returned home one evening to find the lock has been changed on the door of their room and their belongings are out on the street next to the fire hydrant.

I cannot think of any reason why there should be a delay in moving on this much-needed legislation. I have heard some concerns from people who suggest that in cases where perhaps an older woman is letting one room in her home, the operation of the Landlord and Tenant Act might pose a problem. If that is a problem, then let us deal with that by adopting my bill and sending it to committee where we can review the kinds of concerns that may be expressed around the situation of an older person who rents out one room or perhaps a couple of rooms.

In the vast majority of cases, rooming houses are operated not by people who love to run rooming houses but by people who are reserving a piece of property for future sale. There are no little old ladies involved in running these rooming houses, although there are many little old ladies who live in them because, as we know, little old ladies are particularly susceptible to being of low income in our society.

I am going to close my introduction at this stage. I am very interested to hear what other members of the Legislature have to say. I will reserve the balance of my time for a windup in due course.

The Deputy Speaker: The member reserves 10 minutes and 20 seconds.

Mr. Cordiano: Let me start off by talking a little bit about how the government has acted to improve the housing conditions for our citizens in both rooming and boarding situations.

The Ministry of Housing's convert-to-rent and home-share programs are helping to increase the supply of affordable housing units in the existing housing market.

Mr. McClellan: Right. How many? Have you got some figures?

Mr. Cordiano: It is enough to say that it is a far cry from what happened in the past. I have the ministry's Project 3000 here on paper and I want to talk a little bit about that.

Project 3000 is totally funded by the provincial government and is producing 3,000 new units for the so-called hard-to-house. That is a real figure for my friend across the floor. These include people such as the homeless, the disabled, discharged psychiatric patients and many other victims; victims of family violence, for example.

The Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling) also commissioned two comprehensive studies of the supply, support and protection problems faced by roomers, boarders and lodgers. I allude to the Bairstow task force and the minister's advisory committee headed by Don Richmond, general manager of the Metro Toronto Housing Co. Ltd. They have looked at, for example, private homes where the owner resides with four or fewer roomers; hotels; motels; university residences and a number of other items, and have made a number of recommendations.

As well, the April 28 speech from the throne announced that further measures of assistance will be introduced this session. I certainly hope that these measures will include legislation, as my colleague pointed out, to provide protection for roomers, boarders and lodgers against arbitrary eviction, which I think is uncalled for. That

type of initiative is long overdue. On the other hand, there should be procedural modifications that make the system more workable for shared-facilities situations.

We have some real concerns, and I hope the form of the new legislation will not be such a simple solution as suggested by the proposed amendment of the member for Riverdale (Mr. Reville). It is a very complex situation that he is trying to address and to solve with a simple solution. I do not think it is that easy.

I would like to talk about one of the things to which my colleague alluded earlier with respect to an elderly person who may open up his or her home to a boarder or lodger. In the amendment of the member for Riverdale, there is no exemption for that. As he says, let us look at it.

Mr. Reville: Move one in committee.

Mr. Cordiano: Fine, but that is only one example of the kinds of difficulties we could face. Of course, in these situations we are not talking about commercial rooming houses. We are talking about the one person, the elderly person, who opens up his or her home to a student or someone else who is just starting out in life and who has moved into this area from another area. We have to be careful on that because what it really amounts to is that someone is taking on a boarder or a lodger, and we are talking about an intrusion into that individual's private affairs.

It not only would be inconsistent with the rule that a person's home is his or her castle but also could have a really detrimental effect on the people to whom this legislation is addressed and whom it is trying to protect. It could have a detrimental effect and work in the opposite direction.

Home owners are willing to open their homes to those in need of accommodation, but if they are faced with the prospect of having to spend months in court in order to deal with someone with whom they are sharing a kitchen or bathroom, I think this amendment will have the opposite effect and will create far fewer available spaces than we have now.

Vacancy rates are already low, and this could exacerbate the situation. I think the Legislature previously recognized special circumstances of owner-occupants sharing facilities when it exempted such dwellings from the antidiscrimination provisions of the Human Rights Code. The same sort of provisions should be included in any amendments to the Landlord and Tenant Act that extend the protections of the act to rooming and boarding situations.

I am aware that there is a provision in the Landlord and Tenant Act for classes of accommodation to be exempted by regulation. However, the exemption for private homes is something that should be set out in the statute. I am not sure the member for Riverdale's amendment addresses the issue of how all the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act will apply to shared-facilities situations. Before we enact something, we should know what the real impact is going to be.

For example, is the 20-day notice period required in dealing with disruptive tenants appropriate where the tenancy is on a weekly basis? Are the other tenants really heard from when a resident poses a real threat to the life, health and safety of the other tenants? We have to keep that in mind. Will the general procedures of the Landlord and Tenant Act allow for such problems to be dealt with expeditiously or do there have to be adjustments to recognize the special circumstances of shared-facilities situations?

1020

I do not have the answers here today, but before enacting this kind of amendment, I think we have to concern ourselves with some of the issues I have raised. It would be hasty of us to pass this amendment because it just does not address the complexity of the situation. There are a number of exemptions that must be allowed for and there are a number of other, complicated situations that this amendment does not look at.

I think a number of other issues are pertinent and should be addressed before we simply pass an enactment saying that roomers, boarders and lodgers are to come under the provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Mr. Jackson: I am pleased to be able to respond to the bill of the member for Riverdale with respect to improved circumstances for Ontario's roomers and boarders. As I understand the bill—as the official opposition's Housing critic I should understand the intent of the bill—in Ontario today we have a situation where roomers, boarders and lodgers are not defined in the Landlord and Tenant Act and where the courts have ruled that these people are to be treated as licensees rather than tenants.

The bill, as written, would include this type of occupancy for all tenants. However, it leaves open the definition of a roomer, a boarder and a lodger, since there is no strict definition in Ontario statutes. There is no definition of rooming homes or boarding homes anywhere in the Landlord and Tenant Act, but they are

included for the first time under Bill 51. We therefore have a situation where the physical accommodation is covered with respect to the rent increases but not security of tenure for the tenants who are actually in it.

The bill clearly has merit, is timely and is appropriate for Ontario today. There are arguments that this is possibly more a Toronto-centred problem, but I believe legislation should be sensitive to that situation. In that regard, I am concerned that we give full debate to this bill this morning.

I was interested and fascinated to hear the member for Downsview (Mr. Cordiano). I guess he is providing the official government version of its attitude towards this bill. I was intrigued by his reference to the government's speech from the throne and how it was going to react to this bill. He used the very significant phrase—I am sure Hansard will bear this out—"I certainly hope that this type of legislation will be forthcoming." That is real assurance for the roomers and boarders of Ontario that there is a certain degree of hope on the part of the government that it is going to deal with this problem.

Then they provide the buzzwords of all governments. It frightens me every time I hear them from governments. They say, "Of course, you have to appreciate that this is a complex issue." If I have not seen a scenario where they are trying to buy time, I do not know whether I have ever seen a scenario where they were trying to buy time.

The truth of the matter is that this Minister of Housing spent \$180,000 of taxpayers' money to commission a report, yet the member for Downsview says there are still many issues are yet unknown. When are they going to know? After they have spent \$500,000 or \$1 million on further studies? What did we pay for this report? It is an excellent report.

Mr. Cordiano: There are further issues to discuss.

Mr. Jackson: The member for Downsview says we should be discussing it. I will give him an invitation. If he was listening to the member for Riverdale, that member was saying, "Pass this bill and put it into committee where it can be amended in a sensitive manner instead of delaying it."

In today's *Globe and Mail*, I read a comment from the Minister of Housing that he is not going to support this bill because he thinks his version is going to be better. Where does he get that kind of arrogance: his bill is going to be better? Whatever happened to the important words

"consultation," "consensus," "co-operation"? That is why minority government is supposed to work and it has worked in the past in Ontario.

Is the government afraid to go to committee, or is it the condition of its support that it gets all the credit for bringing in these necessary amendments for a certain group of people in Ontario? The Progressive Conservative Party is prepared today to work co-operatively in this chamber and in the standing committee on resources development in order to ensure that the very points raised by the member for Downsview are incorporated.

As a matter of fact, today I will be tabling in the House a bill which has the effect of amending my colleague's Bill 10. This bill is a product of the recommendations which have come from across Canada, as well as from the Bairstow report, with respect to the very point that maybe Bill 10 goes too far. It does not accommodate, for example, those landlords who are owners of their property, resident in their homes and renting out one or two rooms in their basements. Clearly, Bill 10 goes too far in covering those types of situations.

On the other hand, the government should realize that is a very simple amendment to make. What I will be doing today is tabling a bill which calls for an amendment to section 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act and to certain regulations so that a class of accommodation will be deemed not to be a residential premises for purposes of the act. Specifically, the exemption will include private homes in which the owners are occupants and which are accommodating four or fewer roomers, boarders or lodgers, regardless of the physical arrangements.

I submit that if the government has the commitment and sincerity it professes, as it did in its global statements in the throne speech, then it will support both Bill 10 and the bill I am presenting today, and will put them in the resources development committee where we can work co-operatively to develop a final resolution to get this thing resolved before the end of the summer and before we are faced this winter with problems that have been enumerated by a variety of groups both in the media and before committees of this Legislature.

The Conservative Party is pleased to present this amendment, because it recognizes a growing problem throughout Ontario. Even the Bairstow report—I am quoting directly from page 79 of the report—makes reference to the fact that "the task force would like to see a substantial increase in the number of rooms provided in private homes across Ontario. These places will simply not be

provided if there is a fear that a person may be welcomed into the intimacy of a family household only to prove incompatible and very difficult to evict without substantial cost." In Quebec and Manitoba, where roomers and boarders are covered by the landlord and tenant legislation proposed in Bill 10, there is this exemption which I will be tabling in the House today.

"What are the complex issues?" I ask the government. I ask the member for Downsview, "What are these complex issues that we have to address?" We do not want to affect adversely those kinds of tenancy arrangements in Ontario, we can agree on that; but I am asking the government to provide some leadership in support of this bill.

My colleague the member for Riverdale has indicated a willingness to accept in principle the bill I will be placing today to form part of the discussions in the resources development committee. I hope he will be making a definitive statement on that fact before the close of today's debate.

At such point, we will be pleased to support his bill and bring it forward so that the necessary amendments will be brought forward and we address the supply problem of the housing for independent-living adolescents in Ontario, which is a growing problem; we address the supply problem with respect to roomers and boarders by providing them the necessary protections and providing the necessary exemptions not to destroy that supply.

1030

I would point out that the legal aid clinics in Waterloo have also made comments within the report that they would support the kind of an exemption we are proposing in the Progressive Conservative Party.

I would like to share one quick example of the kind of tragic situation that is facing roomers and boarders in Ontario; not in Metropolitan Toronto, that is well documented by the media, but in the smaller towns and communities all across Ontario where we have a growing number of adolescent teenagers who are having difficulty with their home life, with school and, yes, sometimes even with the law.

There is an acute housing shortage, and one of the greatest single sources of housing for those individuals in society is the roomer-boarder situation in a residential home. I am upset and concerned that this government has not been forthcoming with the necessary funding for groups, such as the Halton adolescent support

services, which are providing a housing network with the kinds of home owners who are providing rooming situations.

It is for that reason that I encourage all members of the House to look with an open mind at Bill 10 and to look with an open mind at the amendment the Progressive Conservative Party is proposing, so that it can go to the standing committee on resources development and that responsible legislation will be in place before the end of the summer.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. Your time has expired.

Ms. Gigantes: It is with a sense of relief that I rise to support Bill 10 put forward by my colleague the member for Riverdale. The problem this legislation would address is a problem which is widespread throughout Ontario and it is a problem we know well in the area I represent, the Ottawa area.

The city of Ottawa did a study in 1984 of what had been happening with housing in that city. It discovered that the single largest need was for affordable rental accommodation for single-person households, single people with low and moderate income. When you get right down to it, the most urgent need is for rooming house space.

The city of Ottawa undertook another study at the staff level this year and discovered that, since 1976 when we had 3,000 rooming house accommodations in Ottawa, we have seen a dropoff in the supply of rooming house space for people to call their home. At this period in time, we are down to 1,300 rooming house spaces in Ottawa, and that includes a couple of recent developments that have been undertaken by community-based, nonprofit groups and the city of Ottawa's own City Living corporation. In other words, we have seen a drop in the supply of rooming house accommodation of 63 per cent over the period 1976 to 1987.

That has serious social consequences and in Ottawa the city council is beginning to address that. Unfortunately, it has been left to municipalities so far to try to study the problem and bring forward solutions. Although we have had a task force report at the provincial level, we have not had any action in spite of the voluminous report and the clear recommendations of that report. We have the member for Downsview on behalf of the government still describing this as a problem which is so complex it is going to need government study in order to bring forward a bill.

This is not a complex matter. It is a simple matter and it needs to be addressed simply. People who look for rooming house accommoda-

tion in Ontario simply do not exist in law; they have no legal protections. The result of that status has been enormous suffering and an increase in the difficulties experienced by people who have the lowest of income in the province and who are most in need of a place to call home.

I keep saying "a place to call home" because that was the name of the provincial task force report and it is a name that summons up in our hearts and in our heads an understanding of what we are talking about when we talk about this subject. There are thousands of people who need a place to call home, where they know they have some rights, so that they can call that little room, that little space, theirs; so that they know they exist legally; so that they cannot be treated as nonpersons living in this province as far as their rights to accommodation are concerned.

We have had the member for Downsview talk on behalf of the government about the difficulties of making exemptions for private dwellings and on and on, how complex these things can be in a simple question. He knows perfectly well, or he should after almost two years in this Legislature, that the whole process we have around here legislatively is one where you put forward a proposition for a legislative initiative, the House approves it in principle and it goes to a standing committee, where if need be there can be public hearings and expert opinion brought forward. The members of that committee then bring a recommendation to this Legislature about whether there might be the need for amendment to a piece of legislation.

Frankly, I cannot see it, but if he feels it is so complex why not go that well-established route? We have been travelling that route with legislative initiatives long before he was born. I think it is about time he learned what this kind of process is all about. We need to have people who occupy rooms in Ontario treated as if they are people, with some rights like other people, even though they may have less income than many people of the member's acquaintance and his friendship.

Within the existing Landlord and Tenant Act, we have something we might call the "peace, order and good government" clause. It is a clause of very general application. It says every person shall, in a rental situation, have the right to quiet enjoyment, and "every person" covers every person. A tenant, whether it be a roomer or a tenant in a luxury apartment building—which the member for Downsview, of course, would be more familiar with—has an obligation to allow the other people with whom he or she is accommodated the right to quiet enjoyment. If that tenant

does not allow other people their right to quiet enjoyment, that tenant can be evicted.

That process is well established. It has been in our law for ages; perhaps unbeknownst to the member for Downsview, but in fact it exists in law and it is used in practice. Under this proposal from my colleague, every tenant and every roomer would have the responsibility to allow for the quiet enjoyment of other people with whom he or she was accommodated. The member for Downsview presents problems that do not exist. Let him just allow us to bring this matter to committee and we can show him in great detail.

I want to address briefly some of the examples of what happens to people who have no rights as roomers. In the city of Ottawa, there has been a clear pattern established as the rooming house market and the supply of accommodation for single households with low incomes shrank. That market has squeezed the people who seek accommodation in it to such an extent that they are at the whim and the mercy of the owner of the building.

We know of cases—I know of four in Ottawa—where people who were roomers were told by their landlord—of course, they have no landlord in law, because in law they are not tenants and do not have rights—they were told by the owner of their accommodation that their welfare cheques had to be handed over to the owner and services had to be provided for those welfare cheques. It was a kind of work-for-welfare scheme that the owner suggested to them they were living on and living in, in which they would be called upon to provide janitorial services because they were renting a room and because their source of income was a welfare cheque.

This is not just one owner. This is what happens in the kind of market that people are living in. When they questioned that implication, that they should be working for welfare for the owner of their accommodation, they were locked out. Of course, they can be locked out. They can simply be locked out. If you are locked out, and you are working on a construction site and your boots are inside, you cannot go to work.

1040

Owners of rooming house accommodation in the city of Ottawa have evicted people in the middle of the month for no good cause and refused to return the portion of the rent cheque that had already been paid. People who are living on welfare will go to welfare and say: "My whole month's accommodation allowance is gone. Can

you help me?" Welfare says, "Sorry, we cannot help you."

There was a case of a couple living in Nepean. The woman was ill. They were living in a tent for several weeks. They finally found a room at a certain price. They were told that with two people living in that room the rent would be doubled—as if it were a hotel, where in fact they do not double rates for two-person occupancy.

I know of a case where a woman brought to the attention of the property standards branch in Ottawa the problem that existed in her rooming house—which mainly was that it was a fire hazard—and she was immediately subjected to sexual harassment by the owner of that accommodation. She left, and worried about what would happen to the other women living in that accommodation.

We must pass this legislation.

Mr. Offer: It is a pleasure to participate in this debate with respect to the motion on Bill 10.

I speak with some of the sensitivities from my riding of Mississauga North, a part of the city of Mississauga, which in recent times has had such a large increase of people moving into the city.

There is no question that housing in all its aspects is at critical levels. There is no denying that; it is at critical levels. I speak from my sensitivities as a member for one of the cities which is having a great increase in population, in industrial, commercial and retail activities. There are great demands at all levels and for all different types of services, not only housing but also education and health. We can go right down the line. Mississauga is not unique in this respect, but in many ways possibly it feels more of the demands and the stresses than some other parts of the province. That does not diminish in any way, shape or form the great need and requirement for affordable housing at all levels.

It is not an easy position. It is not an easy solution. It is one that has to be met. It is one that has to be attacked at many different levels. I would like to say at the outset that this government and the Minister of Housing are indeed attacking that problem. There is not an easy solution to the requirement for affordable housing at all different levels.

The throne speech did indicate that the government would introduce measures to improve conditions of roomers and boarders, and we have already heard about the task force. It has been alluded to by previous speakers.

This particular amendment, though seemingly simple at the outset, must be looked at with respect to the impact that this seemingly simple

amendment may have; not would have, but may have. I submit it would be irresponsible on our part not to keep in mind the potential negative impact this amendment may have.

We know that the Bairstow committee recommended including roomers and boarders in the Landlord and Tenant Act, but it also recommended a number of other changes. We know he recommended not just that seemingly simple amendment, but rather exemptions for private homes where owners reside with four or fewer roomers. He wanted exemptions for hotels and motels, for university residences, for accommodation occupied for rehabilitative or therapeutic purposes and for temporary shelters such as hostels.

I do not believe the amendment in Bill 10 comes to grips with the potential negative impact this might have on housing. I know that in a previous life, prior to being the representative for Mississauga North, and even as the representative for Mississauga North, people would come to us and say, "There are too many rights given to tenants." I do not think there is a member in this Legislature who has not heard that. On the other hand, we would hear, "There are too many rights given to landlords." I do not think there is a member who has not heard that also.

I think we must keep in mind that accepting this amendment may provide for a negative impact in that people, private home owners, may be inclined not to admit and not to provide accommodation for roomers and boarders because of the mere fact that the rights provided under Bill 10 would be too much in their opinion. In that respect, we have to be very aware of the negative impact. That is what we have to assess. We have to assess what this amendment would do in the minds of persons who are private home owners. We have to assess what they would think as the people who would be the major suppliers for roomers and the boarders.

To divorce ourselves from that consideration does not do the type of service and justice that roomers and boarders demand. They expect a much greater responsibility on the part of the Legislature. It is because of this that I speak against the amendment to Bill 10, which I do not think will be a great surprise considering what I have previously indicated.

The Minister of Housing and this government have unveiled many other types of programs such as Project 3000, Renterprise, convert-to-rent. We are expending many more dollars with respect to housing, but I do not for a moment say that this means the problems with respect to

affordable housing at all levels shall be and now are a thing of the past. Unfortunately, they are not. There is a constant demand on governments and officials at all levels to meet the demands and needs of those who require affordable housing.

I suggest to the member who proposed it, because I have heard him and I know from where he speaks, that this particular bill and this particular amendment may not rectify and remedy the problem for which the amendment was proposed. Although I compliment him, I must stand against it. There is no question in my mind that this is going to have an impact on the private home owners so that they will be more reluctant to take in roomers and boarders.

1050

In conclusion, I stand against the amendment. I wish to reiterate that this government and the Minister of Housing are doing great work at all different levels for all different types of housing through this province so the critical need and the increasing demands for housing will be met and affordable housing will be a right for everyone in this province. I suggest Bill 10 takes one step away from that particular purpose, which this government and this minister have promoted in the past and will promote in the future.

Mr. Reville: It is hard to believe what terror of indecision my little bill has cast into the hearts of my Liberal colleagues opposite. I want to respond to some of the comments made this morning.

The member for Downsview worked himself into a veritable paroxysm of ecstasy over what his government is doing for roomers. Clearly, the roomers who had lived at 433 Ontario and who left the courtroom yesterday, do not share that view. While I am delighted that the government has embarked on Project 3000, not one single unit is occupied in this province, nor will one unit be occupied for some time to come. In the meantime, because of the inaction of this government, tens and hundreds of roomers may be out on the street, joining the lineup of those who are already there. There are 20,000 waiting for those 3,000 units, so the member can see how inadequate and pusillanimous the government effort is.

My little bill has been accused of being a simple solution. A simple problem requires a simple solution. The problem my little bill addresses is simply this: it provides security of tenure for people who live in rooming houses. It is not, as the member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer) said, a complex problem; this is a simple problem. It is typically paternalistic and Liberal

to try to make a complicated problem out of a simple problem.

We have seen the consistent recipe for inaction from this government. What they do is set up a task force. The task force struggles mightily and emits a report. Then they set up an advisory committee to look at the report that their task force has emitted. All the while, people are getting evicted.

My two colleagues from northwest of Metro worry about what impact Bill 10 might have. Let me tell them what impact their inaction has had. In the last 10 days, 167 people in one riding of this province are out on the street. That is the riding of St. George-St. David, where we are seeing the disappearance of our last great stock of rooming houses. At the snail's pace at which this government moves, it will take 20 years to rehouse the people it is now dehousing.

My dear colleague the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes), who is given to making astounding statements all the time, has offered this Legislature the astounding proposition that roomers are people. As usual, she is absolutely dead right. Roomers are people, and I think it is shocking that the government of Ontario, which is making much of its effort in respect of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, is too gutless and too goofy and too indecisive to protect the people in our province who have the least leverage. Shame on this government.

If I could speak to the member from the southwest corner of the province, I would advise him what the United Nations defines as homelessness. I ask the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini) to listen to this: "Anyone who does not have security of tenure is homeless." That is what the United Nations says in this the Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

This province, which is richer by far than virtually any nation in the United Nations, is declining to give security of tenure to its poorest people. The government cannot get away with it. It is shocking.

Mr. Mancini: You're getting carried away with yourself.

Mr. Reville: I say to the member, "Don't you dare stand up." Is it not amazing that the United Nations would include a person living at 209 Carlton Street, which is valued at \$465,000, as homeless because, in fact, at any minute a knock can come on the door and the big shadow in the doorway can say, "Get on your way"? The person in that room is powerless to do anything whatsoever about it.

Sometimes a legal clinic will say, "Let us go off to the court, and we will try to get the court to do what the legislators have declined to do, what the legislators are afraid to do, as they wallow around in pious claptrap, worrying that somehow, somebody, somewhere in this province might not have a rooming house because a tenant in a rooming house would be protected." I have never heard such nonsense. In 1983 in the city of Toronto there were 905 licensed rooming houses. In 1987 there are 657, a decline of 27 per cent. Am I going to be told that it is because roomers are unprotected that rooming houses have declined? I say to the members: "Come on. Have a little sense."

My colleague the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) has made some useful suggestions. He has talked about those few instances, probably in the smaller centres in Ontario, where Mrs. Murphy decides—he will remember Mrs. Murphy's rooming house that Mr. Kennedy talked about. He probably does not remember. I do not think he remembers much. Let me remind members that there may be a lovely woman wearing a kind of paisley dress with some chintz curtains, who wants to offer a room in her home, and bless her if she does, because people need rooms. It may be that in that case, when we are talking about rooms in primary residences, we should create some exemptions for that; but let me remind my dear colleagues that in fact the Landlord and Tenant Act does provide a number of causes for which one can be evicted.

None of the 167 people who were evicted in the last 10 days committed any of the offences in the Landlord and Tenant Act. They were not disruptive, they were not behind in their rent and they did not beat down the landlord's door with an axe. They were going about their business quietly and, because the landlord thought it was time to cash in and make a ton of bucks on the home they were out in the street.

1100

Should somebody in a rooming house break the law, a simple 911 call will bring the police, who will drag him off and charge him if there is suspicion that he has committed an offence. Let us not be absolutely silly about this. I know that before tenants in other kinds of accommodation got the protection of the Landlord and Tenant Act, those land owners said, "There will be no more accommodation should you protect tenants from whatever our whim is." There are 1.2 million rental units in this province which turn a nice profit for those who own them and they are

quite cheerful to stay in that business. Let us not be so goofy.

This bill must go off to committee. By all means, members should bring their concerns there. We can have the member for Essex South come to the committee too. He can bring whatever puny concerns he may have as well, and we will look at them carefully. I will tell you this, Mr. Speaker, if this government chickens out today on Bill 10—

Mr. Mancini: What will the member do?

Mr. Reville: It is not what I am going to do; it is the impact on the remaining 100,000 or so roomers in this province who are going to continue to be victims of a housing boom and who cannot protect themselves with the Landlord and Tenant Act, as can every other tenant in the province. Every one of those people on the street is a mockery of the intention of this government to do something serious about the housing problems. Something serious can be done by passing this bill.

I say to members, screw up your courage, vote for Bill 10 and get it to the standing committee on administration of justice. Let us make it law, with whatever exceptions that committee thinks have to happen, and let us start protecting roomers instead of abandoning them to the street.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you. The time allotted for this ballot item has expired.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Dean moved resolution 7:

That in the opinion of this House, recognizing that many regions of this province, particularly northern and eastern Ontario, are being discriminated against with regard to gasoline prices, this House recommends that the Treasurer of Ontario, in his budget, bring about changes to the methods of calculating and applying the gasoline tax so that the price for gasoline may be equalized throughout the province.

The Deputy Speaker: The honourable member has up to 20 minutes for his presentation and may reserve any portion of that for his windup.

Mr. Dean: It is most unfortunate that the government blocked the transfer of a resolution similar to this one, standing in the name of the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon), as was requested last week by our party with the support of the third party.

It is obvious the government is very touchy on the issue of gasoline prices in northern and eastern Ontario; it does not want to talk about them. Today, this House will talk about fair

gasoline prices all over the province, even if the government does not care about them.

In our society, it is self-evident that transportation is one of our essential services. Throughout our province, auto and truck transport is the way almost all our travelling is done and is the means by which most of our goods are distributed. All our residents, in every part of Ontario, depend on such services and cannot get along without them.

It is not fair, therefore, that our fellow citizens in parts of eastern and northern Ontario are forced to pay more for gasoline than what is charged in the rest of the province. My resolution calls on the Treasurer, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon), who I wish were in his seat today to hear this important debate, to change the government's method of calculating and applying the gasoline tax so that the price of gasoline may be equalized throughout Ontario.

I am stating unequivocally that I am one of many members in our party who want to see action by the government on this vital issue. I ask for the support of all members of all parties for this fair-minded resolution. The Treasurer has a golden opportunity to effect this change in his budget of next week. I am sure he is looking for substantial support from us, his colleagues in all parties, so that his resolve to carry out this desirable change may be strengthened. By passing this resolution, we demonstrate our belief that all citizens of Ontario should have equal treatment when they buy gasoline; that is, fair treatment.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the honourable member wish to reserve the last 17 minutes and 48 seconds?

Mr. Dean: No.

Mr. Morin-Strom: In rising to participate in this debate, I want to state how important I feel this issue is to residents right across northern Ontario. I welcome the fact that the resolution also addresses prices in eastern Ontario. This is an issue that affects people throughout the province, in rural areas, in the more isolated areas of the north, eastern Ontario and some areas in southwestern Ontario. The fact is that we are paying gasoline prices quite a bit higher than those in the Golden Horseshoe area of the province, and it is about time this government took some action to equalize those prices across this province.

It is an issue we have worked hard on and advocated long throughout this term of the Legislature. It was the first issue I brought forward as an issue of concern to my community when I had my first opportunity to speak in this

Legislature, in question period. I have pursued it since then but with little impact in terms of tangible government action by either the Conservative members who were in power at the time the Legislature started up two years ago or by the Liberal government which succeeded them.

The accord agreement with the Liberals asked that a major inquiry be conducted into the price differential between northern and southern Ontario. That study clearly showed the discrepancies; the fact they came up with was that on average, residents in northern Ontario are paying an additional \$130 a year just because of the average differential of about five cents a litre between northern and southern Ontario. In many communities, the differential is much higher than that. I recognize it is not only in the north but also eastern Ontario, and I hope we can address those differentials as well by taking action that would ensure prices are equalized across this province.

I have some serious concerns about the sincerity of the Conservative members on this issue, however. They had many years in government to act on this issue and never took any government initiative to do anything. In recent months, they have taken up this cause, particularly in northern Ontario, because I am sure they recognize the popularity of this issue among the people and the concerns that are being expressed by northern residents on this issue.

I commend the member for Algoma-Manitoulin (Mr. Lane), who 10 years ago presented a bill to the Legislature asking that gasoline prices be equalized throughout the province. I would far prefer that the member in his resolution had advocated the action the member for Algoma-Manitoulin proposed 10 years ago, that oil companies which wished to sell gasoline in Ontario would be required to sell that gasoline for the same price in every community in this province. It is that kind of regulation that is required to ensure we do get equalized gasoline prices and that we are no longer paying the high cost, the high penalty, for our location at a time when we in the north, because of the longer distances required and the absolute necessity of automobiles, have no choice but to pay more as it is today, and generally drive greater distances as well.

The Conservative members should look back at the bill that had been presented by the member for Algoma-Manitoulin 10 years ago. We had a bit of discussion on this several days ago, in which the member for Algoma-Manitoulin stood in his place and stated that this kind of legislation

had been advocated by him at that time and should be brought back to this Legislature.

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That is the direction I think we have to go. I am not sure what the Treasurer can do in his budget. I hope he does take some action that will lead towards elimination of the differentials in prices of gasoline between the north and the south, but I think it is going to take far greater action than has been suggested specifically within this resolution.

Regulation alone has its risks, certainly when we talk about the kind of regulation that has been instituted on other issues by this Liberal government. Our current Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) announced several weeks ago he was going to regulate the insurance rates in the province. As we have found out there, a freeze is not necessarily a freeze, a cap on prices is not necessarily a cap, and a reduction of 10 per cent on certain insurance rates is not necessarily a reduction at all. Consumers in this province are still getting auto insurance increases of 20 per cent or more from what they were paying six months or 12 months ago. In fact, this government has taken no action in that area, which also affects the drivers of this province and which is a very important issue of basic injustice and unfairness to the consumers of this province.

We do not want to see that kind of action come from this government. We want to see some action that has some force and some teeth and that will ensure the prices are fair in this province.

I would also say there is some competition within this province. One of the major problems in the north is the fact that there is no competition. The study that was done by this Liberal government, which had no conclusions whatsoever, did come up with some interesting facts though, including graphs such as this one on comparative gasoline prices between Sault Ste. Marie and Guelph.

As we can see, the price in the Sault is anywhere from five cents to 12 cents a litre higher than in Guelph over a long period. While the Guelph prices go up and down on a week-to-week basis, the Sault Ste. Marie prices have one fluctuation over a period of a number of months; just one shift, which was an increase of 1.5 cents. In fact, that one shift was not because of any competitive pressures; it was because there was an increase in the federal gasoline tax rate imposed by the Conservative government federally at that time.

There is no indication that there is any competition in prices in northern Ontario, particularly in communities of the Sault area, where there are no independent operators. The price is set by one of the major outlets, and the other gasoline distributors fix their prices identical to that. The dealers we have talked to—and I have talked to a number of them—say they cannot do anything about it because they are told to work only with their margin. They are not given what the price is going to be; they are told by the people in Toronto what the price they are going to be given is. They have a three-cent margin to work with and that is all they can deal with.

I ask this government to take action on this issue before an election is called. Over the two years since the accord was signed, the government has had the chance to take action on one of the major initiatives that was in that accord, and that was a major investigation of the price differentials between northern and southern Ontario. It took them eight months before the study was even commenced. It took them another eight months before the study was completed. It was supposed to be a major inquiry; in fact, it turned out to be a farce, with insufficient notice to the general public. The public was not able to make full presentations.

The details of what is going on internally within the oil industry, the setting of gasoline prices and the kinds of contracts that are being imposed on the local dealers that prevent them from competing on prices were not addressed by that study. Most serious, the conclusions were totally superficial. The conclusions were, of course, that we are paying \$130 more per consumer in northern Ontario and that the reasons are the transportation cost to get up to northern Ontario, the lack of competition in the north and the fact that there are fewer consumers in the north. We know those facts, but there were no recommendations in that study for what the government was going to do about it.

The government has abandoned its role to represent the legitimate interests of the consumers of this province and to take action to see that we do have the price of gasoline equalized, not only across northern Ontario versus southern Ontario but also across the whole province. If a company wants to be in the gasoline business, it should be able to provide gasoline for the same price to every consumer in this province.

M. Fontaine: M. le Président, c'est avec grande surprise, il y a deux ou trois semaines, je suis allé à North Bay et lisais dans les journaux

que M. Harris faisait compagne pour défendre les parties du Nord contre le prix de la gasoline.

I would like to remind the House that there was a Royal Commission on Petroleum Products Pricing in 1977 or 1976 by Claude Isbister. This royal commission was started by the former Conservative government and in this report there is a section about northern Ontario. As my friend the member for Sault Ste. Marie (Mr. Morin-Strom) said, this was tabled with the previous government in June or July 1976 and there were some good points made about gas in northern Ontario.

I know we can blame the government and we can blame the big companies in all this, but it is a fact in northern Ontario the dealers or the wholesale people are taking more per litre. In this report, the one my friend does not like, the one we did last year, there is the fact that in some areas the dealers or the wholesale people are taking more per litre.

This is a fact. I think that royal commission had the power to get the facts that perhaps we did not get last year. It was over a year and we found after 10 years that it confirmed the figures. That is not only the fault of this company or that company, but it is general in northern Ontario or in the east, where there is less volume, that the distributor takes more. It varies between 2.8 and eight cents a litre, and then by gallon there was an eight-cent difference between Kapuskasing and Hearst at the wholesale price level and the retail price.

Then there is talk about the tax. Tax reduction was put in place in other provinces such as Quebec. In Quebec, they reduced the tax in isolated regions by 4.2 cents a litre, but still, after a few months, the price was up again. We looked into that. To say we did not look at it is not right. We worked at it too. We did not spend the time just dreaming.

Mr. Morin-Strom: Undoubtedly.

Mr. Fontaine: Never mind. The member can talk after. He will get a rebuttal.

We looked at the Quebec situation after that. We looked at the Nova Scotia situation. Nova Scotia had a regulated price. It is still at 50.8. They put it down by two cents not too long ago; I guess because an election is coming up, but still it was higher.

Interjection.

Mr. Fontaine: The member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce) should shut up, because his government has done nothing with this. Also, the member for Kenora (Mr. Bernier) asked for another price for the real north, but he did

nothing because up there they paid \$4 or \$5 a gallon on the reserve. It is a report that I found when I was Minister of Northern Development and Mines, and they did nothing about it.

At least we recommended to the people who worked for the northern development councils and the members that this year we should reduce the tax; because if we reduce the tax by four cents, the problem at Red Lake, at Chapleau, at Hearst and at Red Rock will still be the same. You will be a hero tomorrow if you reduce the tax by four cents, but the next day the guy who lives in Chapleau will still pay eight cents more than one in Kapuskasing.

Mr. Laughren: What does that tell you?

Mr. Fontaine: Never mind.

We recommended to the NDCs that we put more money into roads instead of reducing the price at this point. The NDCs came out for it. There were nine NDCs, and there was one dissent on reducing the price and then half of Sudbury was for reducing the price. The rest said we should put the money into the roads.

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At the same time, what is fun over here is that every time there is a budget coming up some people ask for debates so they can go back to their ridings, and if there is something in the budget they are going to say we did it because we figured there was an election tomorrow. That is all they are doing it for; that is it. If it were coming from the New Democratic Party I would accept it, but coming from that side I do not accept it. They had from 1976 to 1985 to do something about this and they did nothing. The report of the royal commission said they should do something, but they have done nothing with it.

Mr. Gordon: That is no argument,

Mr. Fontaine: I do not have to take anything from him. I will listen to this side instead. I have nothing to do with him.

I think my friends from the third party are on the right track. I know they used it in the election last year, or two years ago. I think they won two or three ridings with it. Now the Conservatives are trying to do the same thing because they are scared in the north; they are shaking. Now they are trying to use that as the NDP did a few years ago to win a few votes, but the people will not listen to that because it is going to be all over the north what they did with that report.

At least we are going to do something with our small report. We are going to try to do as was done with food. We are considering a number of options to help increase the level of competition

in gasoline marketing in northern Ontario. Past experience in the food sector has shown that with accurate information it worked with the public. It has worked in the food sector, and we are going to try it again. We are going to use some money to reduce the tax; we are going to put it in the roads. The members saw in the throne speech that we are committed.

I want to remind my honourable friend that 15 years ago the gas station—I used to own a gas station at one time. We used to take 14 cents a gallon in Hearst. In Timmins at that time they were working with eight cents and 12 cents on number one, and we were working on 14 cents and 17 cents in Hearst. The wholesale people used to work on seven cents a gallon in Hearst and they worked on three cents in Kapuskasing or Timmins. That had nothing to do with Imperial Oil or Esso; that was our markup.

At the same time, today the service stations are not doing repairs any more, so they have to rely on the gas or the oil, and it is 4,000 or 10,000 miles before the oil needs to be changed so there is less oil to be sold. The service stations today need more money. That is one of the big problems we found. How we are going to change that, I do not know.

I repeat that I was in Red Rock the other day. There was eight cents a litre difference between Red Rock and Nipigon on the highway. I guess the small service station there was working on eight, nine or seven cents. I did not check, but I know that in some places they are working with only 2.8 cents, and some wholesalers work with 3.2 cents. There is a wholesale price difference between Toronto and Chapleau of 2.3 cents and there is only half a cent difference in wholesale price between Marathon and Toronto.

This is a problem that I do not think we can change by regulating. Looking at the price at the self-serve pump. The crude cost is equal all over the country. When you come to the provincial tax, the federal tax, there is a movement; then we have refining and marketing costs, and profit. We use only 7.5 cents in Toronto; some other provinces use 13. At the retail level in Toronto, they work on 2.9 cents.

Mr. Morin-Strom: Tell them to give it to every retailer for the same price.

Mr. Fontaine: That is the problem. It is okay to have that dream. I had that same dream. I was in Hearst all my life. When you look into it deeper it is not that easy, but I think there are other ways.

We are going to try other ways. We are going to put more money into roads and save some

mileage for the people going from Chapleau to Sudbury. First, we will repair our roads; and second, we will look at other ways to do that before we say we should cut that equally. If it was that easy, somebody would have done something with this. The report did not recommend it that way either after a year of investigating the prices in Ontario. This is for the price in Ontario. There is a section on page 81 that talks about northern Ontario. That is where members will find what I am saying.

The posted price showed 4.7 cents difference between Timmins and Kapuskasing. The dealers' margin was 3.7 at that time. We confirmed that this year. It is easy to go and say things to the people to win votes, but when you come to apply a solution it is different because the small village of Hearst or Red Rock will still be faced with the same differential whether you raise the price or not. Tomorrow, if you took four cents off in the north, the next day northerners would still pay 10 cents more because the dealer takes a bit more. That is the truth.

Can we regulate the dealers? We cannot regulate the dealers. Maybe we can regulate the price at the level of the refining, I do not know, but we cannot tell a dealer who sells gas, "You should sell it at three cents, four cents or five cents less." Can we say, "That is enough of that"? No way. I do not want to see that in this country yet. We are not Communists.

Mr. Morin-Strom: You put it to every dealer in the province for the same price, René.

Mr. Fontaine: I have sold gas for 25 years, and I buy more gas in one day than members buy in a whole year, so I know how much it costs too. When I used to be in the lumber business we went through five million gallons a day. Still, we cannot regulate the dealer. The truth is the dealer and the wholesaler take eight cents too much. That is all. That we cannot change.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Polsinelli): Order. The member's time has expired.

Mr. Gordon: It would just be great if we sent the member for Cochrane North (Mr. Fontaine) out on the hustings in the north to explain why people should be paying more for gasoline.

More than one year ago, I received a letter from the Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) heralding the arrival of the north-south gasoline pricing study. I would like to quote from that letter sent to me by the Minister of Energy in reply to a letter I sent him asking that gas prices be lowered. The minister told me, more than a year ago, "You will also be aware that the

government considers this study to be the first stage in the resolution of this issue."

In other words, they said that the north-south gasoline study put together by this government on the other side was the first stage in bringing about a resolution of the issue. The north is still waiting for the changes in gasoline prices that the government intimated it was going to bring about.

On December 2, 1986, I wrote to the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who is Minister of Northern Development and Mines, urging him to implement a gas equalization policy. I would like to quote exactly what the Premier said in reply to my letter. His reply was a pure and simple defence of the status quo.

Mr. Laughren: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: I really do think that the member for Sudbury's privileges are being abused by his own back-benchers who are heckling him. I wonder if he could make a stop to that.

The Deputy Speaker: If it were correct, it would be a point of order. However, the point is well taken that several members of the official opposition, not being in their seats, are being very noisy even as I speak.

Mr. Warner: Heckling their own member.

The Deputy Speaker: Yes, and the member for Cochrane North is also aiding that noise. Could we please have some more silence for the member for Sudbury?

Mr. Gordon: The Premier's reply is rather interesting. He wrote back saying, "Higher margins for gasoline may be justified."

I would like to say to the Premier that northerners do not believe that higher margins for gasoline are justified. Northerners are fed up; northerners do not want to pay for this ripoff any more. This is the kind of thing that takes money out of the pockets of ordinary people; out of pensioners' pockets, out of the pockets of people who are living on fixed incomes and out of the pockets of people who are carrying a lunch pail in the northern part of this province. It is just not fair.

As a result of the Premier's letter, I launched a campaign in northern Ontario to get gasoline prices lowered. I want to tell the House today what happened. Do members know that across this great province of ours, and particularly in northern Ontario, we had overwhelming support? Through letters and resolutions, the northern municipalities indicated to us that they wanted gas prices lowered. The chambers of commerce said the same thing and so did the

travel associations. Ordinary northerners wrote letters to the Premier and to the Treasurer. They sent petitions, all of them saying: "We want gas prices lowered. We are tired of this ripoff. We are tired of being taxed to live in the north." That was their reply.

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I think back to what was said in the throne speech, that this government was looking for northerners to tell them what we believed was essential, what we thought should happen in the north. One of those home-grown ideas, and an overwhelming idea, was to cut the price of gas in northern Ontario. That is what the ordinary northerner said.

I think it is rather sad. Two years ago, the Premier of this province, when he was campaigning in northern Ontario, promised that he would see that the cost of gasoline between north and south was equalized. He said that. He said it in Sudbury, and we have reporters there who can verify that. It is a shame that today he is saying, "The margin on gasoline may be justified." How fast they forget about ordinary people once they get their limousines and big offices. The ordinary people in the north deserve a break.

I would like also to say it was sad that this government chose last week to refuse to debate my resolution to cut the price of gasoline in the north. That is one of the first times that has happened in years in this House. I cannot think of another precedent like that.

I want to thank the member for Wentworth (Mr. Dean) for making it possible for me to get up today to talk for ordinary northerners in this province. The government is not going to be able to stop the people of the north from expressing their views. We have a right to debate an issue like that today and we are going to be looking very closely at the government members to see which way they vote on this issue. If they vote against this resolution to equalize gas prices between north and south, what they are saying is: "We do not believe in our campaign promises. We do not believe northerners deserve a break."

Do members know that the difference between what someone makes living in the south or living in the north is now \$5,000 a year? Do members not think that person should have the chance of having some of the same opportunities as people who live in the south? Do they not think that person should have his gasoline equalized instead of having to carry on in this way? I want the members of the government to understand this. We in the north view this as a tax for living in the north, and it is just not fair.

I know what the government is going to say. It is going to say, "We are going to use that money on roads." Now what the government is telling us is that it is going to use the money it raised from northerners to pay for roads for northerners. I have to tell them, no one is going to be impressed by that. People are not fooled.

I would like also to point out to the members on the other side that the advisory committee on resource dependent communities, which had as its chairman Dr. Rosehart—and our government took pains to appoint people who represented the north—recommended that there be a cut in gas tax of at least five cents a litre. Yet today we have the member for Cochrane North standing up and blathering away about how he used to run a gas station and saying that northerners—I cannot believe he said this—should pay more for gasoline to prop up the gas stations across the north. I do not think the northerners are going to buy that argument. I think it is a weak argument and a foolish argument.

I would go so far as to say this: we in northern Ontario know there are two Ontarios today. There is the prosperous southern Ontario, where unemployment has almost been wiped out. We have a southern Ontario where the economy is booming. Yet we have seen over 20,000 jobs disappear in northern Ontario in the last two years. It is time northerners got a break on their gasoline. It is time they stopped paying a tax that is both regressive and unfair.

I would just like to point out what happens in a small town in northern Ontario. Let us take Chapleau, for example. The people of Chapleau pay on average 50 cents a gallon more for gasoline than the people down here in southern Ontario. We are not talking for the Sudburys, we are not talking just for the North Bays or the Timminses, we are talking for the little people, the small communities. Do members know, for example, that at present Chapleau has the lowest per capita income in the north? Yet these people are being hosed. They are no farther away in actual miles than places like Wawa or Timmins, yet they are paying more. It is not fair, it is not right and it should be changed.

For example, if you owned a Monte Carlo, you lived in Chapleau and you filled the tank twice a week—which is quite conceivable; they do a lot of long-distance driving in the north—you would be paying \$759.20 more a year in cost of gasoline than someone living in southern Ontario.

In conclusion, I want to say that northerners are tired of losing their jobs. We are tired of having tourists come to the north and tell us they

are not coming back because they pay too much for gasoline, it is costing them too much. We are tired of a government that has shown such insensitivity to northerners. It is only fair that this government lower the price of gasoline. It has the power; we expect it to do it.

Mr. Laughren: Whenever I hear this debate going on, I always think it is appropriate that the word "gas" is involved in it.

I must say the resolution as put by the member for Wentworth is a very strange one, because there are two principles involved in his resolution, as I understand it. One is the question of equalization of prices and the other is the question of who pays for the equalization of prices for gasoline across this province.

I think it is appropriate to reread the member's resolution. It states:

"That in the opinion of this House, recognizing that many regions of this province, particularly northern and eastern Ontario, are being discriminated against with regard to gasoline prices, this House recommends that the Treasurer of Ontario, in his budget, bring about changes to the methods of calculating and applying the gasoline tax so that the price for gasoline may be equalized throughout the province."

The member is saying the prices should be equalized: no problems from this caucus. He is also saying, though, the taxpayers of the province should pay for that equalization. That is what the member is saying. The member is saying it is not the fault of the private sector for causing this inequality for northerners and easterners. That is what he is saying. He says it is not the fault of the private sector. I do not know where he got that information. How did the member come to the conclusion that it was not the private sector that was raising the prices to unacceptable levels in northern Ontario? Where did he get that information? I did not hear him give us any. If he is saying it is the tax system in Ontario that is discriminating against northerners, let him stand up and say so and let him admit that his government endorsed that policy for many years. He has not said that.

The member for Cochrane North is more honest in his response. He said we could lower the tax today by four cents or whatever and tomorrow the retail price would be right back up to where it was before. I agree with the member; that is exactly what would happen. What he did not do was tell us why. He did not say what that says about the oil and gas industry in this province. He did not make that final statement. He left it hanging. I think the people of Ontario

will draw their own conclusions on that. If we lower the tax by four cents a litre and the next day the price is the same, somebody is taking advantage of the market.

I represent a community called Chapleau that has been abused by the oil and gas industry. There is absolutely no question about that; no question whatsoever. The service station operators in Chapleau blame the industry, the suppliers. The industry—and we have correspondence to back this up—blames the service stations. Who is sitting on the sidelines digging deeper and deeper into their pockets while this argument is going on? The motorists in Chapleau. The same is true for motorists all across northern Ontario.

I find it very strange that we have this bizarre debate going on, with the Tories saying, "Let the taxpayers pay for what the industry is doing to drivers in northern Ontario;" and the Liberal government saying: "We do not think the taxpayers should pay for that. As a matter of fact, we do not think anybody should, except the motorists in northern Ontario." That is exactly what they are saying.

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If they do not want the industry to pay the price of equalization and they do not want the taxpayers to pay the price of equalization, then they simply do not want equalization.

I was taken aback when the member for Cochrane North, in response to some out-of-order heckling from this side—I cannot remember from whom—said: "You cannot set the price of the retail level. We are not Communists." We are not Communists; retail price? The member said we cannot set the retail price in this country because we are not Communists.

Shall we look at all the retail prices that are regulated? Are those Tories, because they regulated the price of beer and liquor, a bunch of Commies? I think the privileges of the Tories have been abused by the member for Cochrane North. I have never met a Commie in the Tory party; I never have, and I am prepared to go on record with that.

I really find it strange, because we have a choice to make if we are serious about the equalization of gasoline prices in northern and eastern Ontario. Either the taxpayers of Ontario pay for that equalization or the industry pays for the equalization. If one of those two do not, then we will continue to have the inequality we have now.

This is a classic case where if the industry does not put its own house in order government will. It is like the auto insurance industry. Because they

have allowed the drivers to be abused on auto insurance rates, the government is moving in. In some way or another, either through the public auto insurance plan or through regulation, which the minister is rambling about, one way or the other there is going to be intervention in the marketplace and those lovers of free enterprise out there will wring their hands and say: "Too much government intervention. That is the problem with this country and this province."

But in virtually every single case where there has been government intervention, it has been because of abuses by the private sector. This is just another example; if the industry does not get its house in order and equalize the price across northern and eastern Ontario, government, whatever government, will have no option but to intervene and do it on behalf of the consumers of northern and eastern Ontario.

So the industry has a choice. The industry has a clear choice, and if it chooses to go the route of not putting its house in order itself, then I would suggest government will have no choice. The Liberal-appointed task force, affectionately referred to in northern Ontario as the dog-and-pony show, travelled the province a couple of years ago; and when that group went around northern Ontario it concluded that the cost of transportation was about one and a half cents per litre more, as I recall.

We know the price of gasoline in Chapleau is a lot more than that above the transportation costs. I think the member for Sudbury used the price of 50 cents per gallon above what it is in Toronto. I do not think the people in Chapleau and other communities in the north should be paying 50 cents more per gallon. What has allowed the industry to get away with it was the whole conversion to metric, which allowed the industry to jack up prices, one, two, three and four cents a litre. It would never have dared do that if it was cents per gallon, priced in gallons. Even though I am not one of those opponents of the metric system, when I see abuses like this I say the private sector is begging for intervention. As a matter of fact, it is challenging the government to intervene. If the government chooses not to do so, then of course it will pay the price.

It is silly to talk about whether there is political grandstanding or whether it is being used for political purposes. What in the world are we here for if not to use leverage in order to effect government policy?

On this side of the House, we have no hesitation in saying to the government it is time to intervene in the marketplace. They are abusing

the motorists of northern Ontario and it is the responsibility of government to intervene on behalf of the motorists of northern Ontario.

Mr. Ramsay: I would like to tell the honourable member before he leaves that I will be voting in favour of this resolution. I am sorry he does not want to hear it.

Mr. Laughren: It is taxpayers' pay.

Mr. Ramsay: I am not exactly in favour of the mechanism, because probably the taxpayers should not pay.

The problem with trying to wrestle with this situation in the north is the discrepancy in prices throughout the small towns and big cities of northern Ontario, from the northwest to the northeast. Sometimes when you are travelling around you find the prices are on par, and the odd time some prices in the north have been lower than those in the south. I think the trick is that we all feel there has to be some sort of equality in the prices paid; but what mechanism do we adopt to do this, that is the problem.

I would argue with some of the statements made in the House today about who are the culprits in this. I think it might be possible to lower, say the tax in northern Ontario and to control it at the wholesale or company level, but how do you control it from town to town, from station to station through the small operator? That is the problem.

It is a problem of enforcement of control that is a concern of the government, and I would certainly welcome the ideas of the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris), the member for Sudbury and the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) on how we can do these things, because we share the same concerns.

As a northerner, I spend much time in my car and on the highways. Maybe we have differences of opinion on how we have to go about solving this problem, but in the north this type of issue—highways and gas—is a people issue. We spend a lot of time in our automobiles, travelling great distances. It is not uncommon for people in the north to commute 60, 70 or 80 miles to work. Obviously, the condition of the highways and the price of gas are of vital concern to northerners.

Mr. Laughren: You are talking out of both sides of your mouth.

Mr. Ramsay: No, I am not talking out of both sides of my mouth.

The Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Ramsay: At this time in northern Ontario, the self-service price is lower than the Canadian average, and that is taking an average

of northern Ontario prices. If you go to Thunder Bay, North Bay and Sudbury, you have gas prices a couple of cents more a litre than in the south, but if you go to Red Rock and Nipigon you get very expensive prices, sometimes up to 10 cents a litre more. How do we control that? What mechanism do we use?

The member for Wentworth, who proposed this motion, talks about using a mechanism of tax adjustment. How fine-tuned do you make that mechanism in order to deal with the discrepancies in the different towns and regions of the north? That is a very difficult problem when you have to deliver a program. We know there is a problem and we accept that. How do you regulate and control that?

I will be voting in favour of this. It is obviously a challenge to our government to deal with this problem. We thank the member for bringing it up.

Mr. Harris: I am pleased to rise in the Legislature today to support this resolution. I want to compliment the member for Sudbury, who first put this resolution for debate, and I want to say how disappointed I was, as he expressed earlier, that the government would not allow that resolution to proceed. Also, I want to thank the member for Wentworth for allowing this resolution to go ahead today standing in his name. I think it shows a great sensitivity to what is happening in northern Ontario at this particular time of our political life.

I also want to congratulate the member for Timiskaming (Mr. Ramsay), who I think recognizes there is a problem. Even though he was not a member of that party when it toured the north and made a commitment to equalize gas prices, now that he is a member of that party he recognizes it is not good enough to say, "Forget what we promised two years ago in the campaign. Forget that we said we would address the problem." He has come forward and said: "Yes, it is difficult. There may be some problems."

1150

Do you get into total regulation? I have to be the first guy to tell members that this is not a new problem; it is a growing problem, a severe problem. It is particularly relevant now for two reasons. It is particularly relevant now because the disparity between the north and the south has been very much more pronounced in the past couple of years than it had been in the past.

Second, there are significant dollars available for the government to do something about it at this particular time. The member for Sudbury and I have talked about this issue. It was difficult

to go to a Treasurer in 1982, 1983 and 1984—we went; we talked about it—and say we needed \$100 million when the government was \$2 billion in the hole and there was a recession on and it did not have the money to address this problem.

So I do not apologize. I do not apologize for fighting for the past six years for northern Ontario. I do not apologize for fighting two years ago, I do not apologize for fighting last year and I do not apologize for fighting right now for northern Ontario and something that can be done.

When we get to this particular resolution: some have said four cents, some have said five cents and some have said to regulate prices. I want to talk about regulating prices. I have had difficulty with that. There is no point in following the example of Nova Scotia, having regulated prices and having them equal in the north and the south if they are higher than they are now. I do not want equalized 55-cent-a-litre gasoline prices throughout this province, and regulation leads to that. Big companies—you see it in Bell Canada, the gas companies and Ontario Hydro—have more lawyers, more accountants, more people who can justify all the cost pass-throughs, and I firmly believe that will lead to even higher prices. So I do think the government has to play a role.

Some of my colleagues may disagree with me, but I do not object to service station operators making a living either, and it is more difficult in the north. That is one of the reasons government has to get involved. They do not have the same volumes; we know that. But the old argument of transportation costs is a very small part of this problem. It is the lack of competition, the lack of price wars and the higher cost of doing business in northern Ontario.

When we look at all those options, I come down to the one where I think the government—and I have said it should look at the taxation policy—any government has to sit down with the oil companies. They have to say: “Here is what is happening. Never mind all the arguments about why it is happening and telling us the profit margins and everything else. It is happening. We have the bucks. We have the money right now. We are going to help the north.”

Maybe it should be eight cents a litre. What the heck is the matter with doing a little something to stimulate northern Ontario? Maybe we should eliminate the gasoline tax in the north altogether. It would cost about \$142 million.

Let members ask any person in northern Ontario, any council, any business or any tourist operator: “What would it do for you in northern

Ontario, Mr. Industrial Commissioner, if gas were eight cents a litre lower? Would that help you attract industry? Would that keep the bus tours rolling through? Would that encourage the trucking companies to keep coming through northern Ontario instead of going through the United States? Would that help your trucking businesses? Would that help your transportation costs?” It would help literally everybody.

I have said fair is fair. Number one, the government should live up to the campaign promise of two years ago. It was a good promise, a promise I agreed with. The government is now in the position and has the power to do it, so it should live up to it.

Number two, the government’s promise was to attempt to equalize. Its own study says on average four cents. That will not solve all the individual problems. It is not going to be perfect. There is still going to be a little difference here and there. There will be a big gas war in Guelph or some place, and they will get it for 25 cents a litre for a week; but on average, the study says that is what has happened. If the government lives up to that promise, that is what it will do.

I would be the first one to encourage the government to go even further and say, “Let us do something to stimulate northern Ontario; it is at a great disadvantage right now.” Why are the auto parts companies getting grants and everything to locate in southern Ontario? The government argues, and I understand the argument, that nobody can go to General Motors and say, “If you want to do business in Ontario, you have to do it in Kapuskasing.” They cannot do it, or they will not do it. There is nothing the matter with keeping on trying to encourage them, and we should all keep working on that.

But here is something where we can bring northern Ontario closer to the market, closer to southern Ontario. I had an interesting comment from one of my constituents talking about this. We were talking about the problems of industry in Nipissing and encouraging it to locate there, and somebody said, “You know, if North Bay was right beside Toronto, we would be booming.” What brings North Bay closer to Toronto? You cannot pick it up and move it beside Toronto. Four-lane highways bring it closer. Reducing the cost of transportation brings it closer. This guy was on the right track.

We are dealing today with a resolution that will go a long, long way towards helping northerners help themselves, towards helping make it more attractive.

Mr. G. I. Miller: Why did you not do it 42 years ago?

Mr. Harris: First, I guess, I was not born 42 years ago. If one reduced it by four cents a litre 42 years ago, I guess you gave it away for free. The member should not be so stupid with his ridiculous interjections and live up to his own commitment.

I have had six years to fight on behalf of northern Ontario, and I am going to have another 20 to fight on behalf of northern Ontario, because I will continue to fight whoever is in government, whenever the time is, on behalf of northern Ontario issues.

I have to compliment our colleague the member for Timiskaming. He has learned this is not a Progressive Conservative issue. It is not a New Democratic Party issue. It is not a Liberal issue. Damn it, it is a northern Ontario issue. When you are from northern Ontario, those people elect you to come down here and fight for northern Ontario. Any northern member who comes down here and does not fight for his people in northern Ontario does not deserve to be re-elected and does not deserve to come back into this Legislature and may be in for a big surprise when the time comes.

We are talking now about this window of opportunity. When the differential was some 10 cents a gallon instead of up to 50, the previous government lowered northern car licences. They did a few things along the way.

The problem in the last two years has gotten much worse. The disparity between the north and the south in the last couple of years has gotten much worse. This government committed in the last campaign to do it, a good campaign promise. The NDP committed as well. I disagree with their method; I am afraid they would equalize it and they could say, "Look, it is equal," but it would probably be even higher than it is right now.

I believe there is an opportunity, and it is critical that the government listen now. There is plenty of time before the budget comes down next Wednesday. It is critical that this debate was allowed to take place before that budget comes down. This government has an opportunity now to say to the north: "We will put you on equal footing. We will try to do something to help you." They should reduce the gasoline prices and monitor the oil companies, and away they go.

Mr. Wildman: I join this debate with rather mixed feelings. What is proposed in this resolution in effect does not guarantee lower gasoline prices at the pump. What it does in fact is to have the taxpayers and the Treasury

subsidize the oil companies' higher pricing practices in northern Ontario. It is not adequate. It is speaking to an issue that is very important to all northerners, but it is not adequate.

It is unfortunate that this government did not live up to its commitment to do something about gasoline prices in northern Ontario when it signed the accord. It is most unfortunate that we now have these Johnny-come-latelies, who 10 years ago could have acted on the bill of the member for Algoma-Manitoulin to have equal prices across Ontario but voted down their own member's bill.

What kind of phoniness is this? Let us actually do something for northern Ontario and do something about high gasoline prices in the north, instead of having these silly debates and never doing anything.

1200

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to inform the members that the time for debate has expired. We will now deal with ballot item 4.

LANDLORD AND TENANT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Reville has moved second reading of Bill 10.

All those in favour will please say "aye."

All those opposed will please say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Reville: May I request unanimous consent of the Legislature to refer Bill 10 to the standing committee on the administration of justice?

Mr. Speaker: Is there a majority agreement? The standing orders say there must be a majority agreement.

Agreed to.

Bill ordered for standing committee on administration of justice.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Dean has moved resolution 7.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: I hope I can have the attention of the members at this point. Because of another matter that is on Orders and Notices, I would like to bring to their attention the matter in relation to the notice of motion standing in the name of the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon). Since the House in its wisdom has made a decision on the resolution of the member for Wentworth (Mr.

Dean) today it now becomes out of order for the member for Sudbury to move resolution 4 as it appears on page 9 of today's Orders and Notices because it deals with the same subject matter.

For the information of the members I would like to refer to Beauchesne's fifth edition, page 150: "An old rule of Parliament reads: 'That a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or negative, cannot be questioned again but must stand as the judgement of the House.' Unless such a rule were in existence, the time of the House might be used in the discussion of a motion of the same nature and contradictory decisions would be sometimes arrived at in the course of the same session."

Also, our own standing order 43 states, "No motion, or amendment, the subject matter of which has been decided upon, can be again proposed during the same session."

Therefore, I am advising the House that it would be out of order to proceed in this session with the motion by the member for Sudbury under ballot item 7.

Mr. Harris: This party accepts the Speaker's ruling. We would ask, and perhaps serve notice to all members of the Legislature and to the

House leaders, that in view of that and the shortness of time between the two ballot items, the member for Sudbury does have another resolution that he will be circulating with as much notice as he can. Obviously, it will not fit in with the rules of the House. We ask the parties to take that into consideration and perhaps allow the member for Sudbury to substitute another resolution.

Mr. McClellan: We also accept your ruling, Mr. Speaker. It is unfortunate that the government obstructed the member for Sudbury from being able to move resolution 4. We were perfectly willing to have ballot item 7 standing in the member's name proceed but, as I say, it was obstructed by the government House leader, and we are prepared to make whatever arrangements that are necessary to permit the member for Sudbury to take his regular turn in the ballot rotation next week.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the comments; however, it will be up to the House to make the decision on what action shall follow that ruling.

The House recessed at 12:06 p.m.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The House resumed at 1:30 p.m.

SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: Before we proceed, yesterday the member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor) raised a question of privilege regarding a letter he had received in his capacity as chairman of the select committee on retail store hours. At his request, I undertook to examine the matter to determine whether there appeared to be a prima facie question of privilege in relation to the letter the honourable member was kind enough to forward to me.

There is a long-standing tradition of parliament that matters which arise in a committee or which in some way pertain to the activities of a committee should first be dealt with by the committee in question. If, upon reflection, the committee feels its privileges have been attacked in some way, it would be its duty to report that fact to the House, which could then take a decision.

That is why, upon reflection, it would seem to me wiser for the committee to deal with this matter directly. It is presently still legally constituted and has at hand all powers necessary to deal with this matter. If, after due process, the committee feels that it must report the matter to the House, I am certain the House and its members will give the committee's report their full attention.

I thank the member for Oakville for bringing this matter to my attention and I urge him to bring this matter to the attention of the committee, of which he is chairman, as quickly as possible. I will return the letter to the member.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

HAZARDOUS WASTE TREATMENT FACILITY

Mr. Andrewes: Some time ago, by way of a hand-delivered letter, I asked the Premier (Mr. Peterson) to meet with a group of citizens from my riding who wished to petition him over the proposed toxic waste treatment and storage facility of the Ontario Waste Management Corp. in the municipality of West Lincoln. This group is widely supported in the community by citizens, interest groups and a number of elected municipal representatives. This is not a group of radicals, but residents of a rural community who fear that this proposal might jeopardize their

future and the future of their children. Furthermore, if technology for treating toxic waste could develop fairly in Ontario, the mammoth plant proposed by the OWMC might prove redundant.

To date, in spite of repeated phone calls, I have received no response from the Premier's office. I am left in the very awkward position of not being able to advise my constituents on whether they will receive a positive or negative reception. Must the Premier hide behind a busy schedule, which includes naming the domed stadium, or will he allow these citizens of Ontario to exercise their democratic rights? Perhaps we must wait until after the Liberal nomination in Lincoln this evening.

ONTARIO MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Mr. Foulds: I rise to raise the concerns of a number of public service employees in the Thunder Bay area with regard to OMERS, the Ontario municipal employees retirement system. Spearheaded by Don Campbell of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 966, this group has been examining the structure and benefits of the plan. Basically, it feels the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and the OMERS board should look positively into the stacking of Canada pension plan and OMERS benefits instead of the present integration. It feels the present surpluses in the plan should be used to improve substantially the plan's benefits in the area of spousal allowances and regular indexing.

The Thunder Bay group has already taken steps to enlist the support of workers all across Ontario through the Ontario Federation of Labour. It is anxious to bring about changes that will enable workers to retire as early as possible and still live with dignity. It feels it is vital to create a framework that will allow all workers to retire earlier so younger workers will have jobs to move into.

Finally, the group feels very strongly, as does the New Democratic Party, that any surpluses in the plan are the property of the employees and should be used to improve benefits, not to write down the employer contributions in the future.

I am also sure they will be seeking representation on the OMERS board when such a position for an employee representative becomes available.

NURSES' WEEK

Ms. Hart: This week, in Ontario and throughout the other provinces of Canada, members of the nursing profession are celebrating Nurses' Week. As parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston), I wish to draw the attention of this House to this special celebration and to express my support for the work nurses are carrying out here in Ontario.

With more than 75,000 registered nurses in Ontario, nurses are the single largest health care profession in our health care system and they represent an essential and key component in its effective operation. While I am expressing this tribute, thousands of Ontario nurses are attending to patients at their bedsides, assisting in operating rooms, emergency rooms and critical care units in hospitals, visiting elderly and disabled people in their homes and caring for the frail in nursing homes.

The record of the nursing profession in the provision of health care stands for itself. Let me, on behalf of the members, express the appreciation and thanks of this House to all Ontario nurses this week, Nurses' Week.

CAMPING LIMIT

Mr. Villeneuve: Just as the summer camping season is about to begin, the St. Lawrence Parks have decided to enforce measures against many of our senior citizens and handicapped people. Many of our seniors spend their summers camping at our parks with their trailers. In all cases I know of, the parks are not crowded, so these seniors are not denying a camping site to anyone else.

This year, the parks have decided to enforce a maximum 23-day camping limit. My riding office has already received many calls and letters of concern, and this at a time when most seniors do not even know about this new policy.

The result of this policy is that the long-term camping traditionally carried out by many seniors will be banned in the St. Lawrence Parks Commission parks. No attempt has been made to deal with the summer camping patterns of seniors and to accommodate their needs. In the past few days, many seniors have told me that they are willing to pay their fair share, but seniors cannot even do that if they are not allowed to stay beyond the 23-day limit at one site.

Ontario has three cabinet ministers with some responsibility for this, and among them surely they can make some policy and give us some direction. The Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs (Mr. Van Horne),

the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) and the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) must act now before the season is under way to provide camping access for our seniors.

We need leadership. We need direction from these ministers. We need it now.

DEVELOPMENTALLY HANDICAPPED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: On April 29, the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) announced that 130 developmentally handicapped people would be released this year from the intolerable situation they find themselves in in homes for special care, leaving about 2,000 people in those institutions in inappropriate care.

He said to people in the know that there would be a full announcement about a seven-year plan to deinstitutionalize on May 7. It now is May 14 and we have still to see that plan. As a result, we are left with the notion that he is playing god. He will decide which people can stay in those institutions and which people will be released to the community and when.

He has said nothing about the repairs to the major institutions for the developmentally handicapped that he promised last year. He has said nothing about how many people who are mentally retarded are in rest homes in Ontario, and I do not even believe he knows that number. He has said nothing about the amount of money he is going to give for programming for those people left in homes for special care. He gave out about \$30,000 a year to those individuals who will be brought out to make sure they can live in the community. He has left people in the homes for special care, without any individualized programs to speak of, and less than \$5,000 of budget.

I suggest that we have had nothing but flim-flammy and what we need is a real plan of total deinstitutionalization.

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JOB TRAINING FOR OLDER WORKERS

Mr. McLean: I have a statement today that is directed to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye). As he knows, unemployed workers have the opportunity to take advantage of the Futures program for job retraining. Once they complete the program, they are better equipped to re-enter the work force rather than having to resort to unemployment insurance.

I am seriously concerned that older workers, those in their 40s, 50s and 60s, are becoming a lost generation when they are laid off because of

declining production or factory shutdowns. These people have given much of their work experience, dedication and skills. They are being pushed into the background because of the rush to retrain and re-employ younger workers. The odds are currently stacked heavily against older workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own. There are no retraining programs for them. That means no work and a very dim future at a time they should be working at their full potential, rather than becoming just another segment of society forced on to the unemployment rolls.

Futures may well be the answer for younger workers but there is no future for their older counterparts who are laid off and need retraining to re-enter the work force.

What government assistance will be made available to retrain these workers between the ages of 45 and 60? Will the minister announce a program to enable older workers to continue as productive members of the Ontario work force?

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Allen: The question of capital allocations for school construction has recently been a matter of debate in the Legislature during question period. This party is not going to claim that the \$226 million allocated is sufficient to meet the full needs that are out there, but neither are we going to argue that one part of the public system was rewarded at the expense of the other. There is a reasonably fair process in place to establish the priority of need. What we do say is that the province-wide process appears to have bypassed some outrageous school accommodation conditions that the minister must review on a case-by-case basis.

I refer, for example, to St. John's College of the separate board in Brant county, where 1,250 students endure incredibly cramped conditions. No funding was allocated to St. John's, even though by September there will be 25 portables on the site and by 1989 there will be 35. Local solutions, as proposed by the minister, simply leave the students at the mercy of coterminous boards and incite interboard rivalry.

I ask the minister to review this and other similar cases in both systems with a view to relieving utterly intolerable conditions.

STATEMENTS BY THE MINISTRY

HEALTH RESEARCH

Hon. Mr. Elston: Earlier today, I announced that my ministry had approved a grant of \$7.5 million to the University of Toronto. This money

will be used to develop and install a positron emission tomography, or PET, scanner at the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry. This is new high-technology diagnostic equipment that will help the Ontario research effort into schizophrenia, multiple sclerosis and degenerative conditions, such as Alzheimer's and Huntington's disease.

I also wish to inform the house that my colleague the Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) today announced that the Ministry of Health has approved a \$500,000 research grant to McMaster University in Hamilton to develop a prototype patient information system.

We have strong expectations that the new system will result in better health care planning and more efficient service by health professionals. Once tested, we will then determine the system's application in other Ontario communities.

Today's announcements are testimony to our government's intention to see this province develop into one of the world's leading health research centres. To create the environment that will make this possible, within the past six months more than \$50 million in government funding has been committed to Ontario's research effort.

We have provided \$10 million for construction of a new heart research centre at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute. The new centre will attract some of the world's leading cardiovascular experts to continue their scientific investigations at Ottawa. Two million dollars has been approved to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

In April, I announced that \$4.5 million had been approved to establish the Eye Research Institute of Ontario at the Toronto Western Hospital campus of the Toronto Hospital Corp. The institute's prime objective will be to conduct research into diseases of the eye and to develop new treatment techniques for eye disorders.

Last December, our government approved \$5 million for the new multi-organ transplant unit at the University Hospital in London.

Funding of \$2 million has been approved for the John P. Robarts Research Institute in London to help new research programs generated out of that institution. It will also help us to attract those most respected Ontario and Canadian scientists to return from abroad to work here in Canada.

In April, my colleague the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) announced that a multidisciplinary department of geriatrics and gerontology would be established

at McMaster University in Hamilton with government funds of some \$12 million.

In addition to these major programs, this year the ministry will provide a total of \$7 million to Ontario's five health sciences centres to support research personnel and to buy necessary equipment. Another \$5.3 million will support some 82 independent research projects in a variety of community and clinical settings.

Finally, because good management is so critical to our health care system and because good management requires sound decision-making, our government will provide \$1.4 million to establish Canada's first health economics research centre at McMaster University in Hamilton.

These research grants represent a sound investment in Ontario's health care future. Our government recognizes that we need a vigorous research community if we are to generate new ideas and create new options and alternatives within our system. We are open to innovative and responsible approaches to health care and we expect to see leadership from our research community.

We have another priority. We want to guide research effort in Ontario in such a way that we obtain maximum return on our investment. We do not want a proliferation of duplicated efforts. What we do want is to create centres of specialty and excellence in heart disease, eye research and organ transplantation, for example, so that each centre becomes a source for the whole province.

Finally, we have a third priority. We want research to have a direct impact on patient care. Our long-term objective is to see clinical practices changed and modified by information received from the research community; in other words, improved health and better health care for the people of Ontario.

LEGAL SERVICES PLAN

Hon. Mr. Scott: I rise today to inform the House of a very significant development in the provision of access to legal services.

As I have had occasion to say a number of times, there is a risk that access to justice will tend to be restricted to either the rich who can afford to retain counsel or the disadvantaged who have the benefit of legal aid under the legal aid plan. Those in between, the great bulk of our fellow citizens, often face significant hardships in knowing and exercising their legal rights.

Two and a half years ago in Ontario, the Canadian Auto Workers, together with General Motors, Ford and Chrysler, decided to do

something about this. They launched Ontario's first major prepaid legal services plan. Pursuant to this plan, union members in those plants have free access to lawyers for a variety of legal services and the right to obtain further services at rates below those normally charged by lawyers.

In the fall of 1985, the Law Society of Upper Canada, which is the governing body of the profession, established guidelines for these kinds of plans that the CAW legal services plan found unacceptable. Litigation was commenced. In the meantime, the plan operated under an interim arrangement. The arrangement permitted the plan to open offices staffed by full-time, salaried lawyers and to offer services through members of the private bar, both those who enter into arrangements with the plan to limit their fees and those who do not.

The plan has proved to be a success. From November 1985 to May of this year, over 52,000 cases were commenced under its auspices, a usage rate of more than 50 per cent of all eligible employees. Roughly 85 per cent of this business has involved real estate, wills and family law matters.

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All this has been at risk in the pending litigation. However, today I am delighted to announce that the Canadian Auto Workers legal services plan and the law society have resolved their differences. The litigation has been discontinued and a fair and balanced agreement has been achieved, pursuant to which prepaid legal services plans can now flourish across Ontario.

In my opinion, this is a momentous achievement. As a result of the ground-breaking efforts of both parties, the law society and the Canadian Auto Workers, this important method of providing legal services to ordinary Canadians is as of now a recognized part of the legal services fabric of Ontario. The rules are now clear. They reflect the law society's duty to ensure the quality of legal services as well as the desire of organizations such as the automobile manufacturers and the Canadian Auto Workers to effectively deliver legal services to their members.

I call upon all members to salute the authors of this historic agreement. Present in the gallery—and I ask members to honour them today—are: Arthur Scace, Esq., treasurer of the law society; Rendall Dick, undertreasurer of the law society; Dr. Ron Ianni, the president of the University of Windsor and chairman of the administrative committee of the CAW legal services plan, and Sid Linden, the executive director of the plan. In the upper gallery are members of the union side

of the plan and the employers' side of the plan, and I would ask them to stand.

Also, in his absence, I want to commend Bob White, president of the Canadian Auto Workers, and various officials of the approving companies, some of whom are present, for the important role they played. I want to underline that this important new initiative has been undertaken without legislative intervention.

Mr. O'Connor: You stayed out of it; that is what got the deal done.

Hon. Mr. Scott: There are some here who would legislate everything. I am not in that crowd.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps you would let the minister continue with his text.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I want to underline that this important new initiative has been undertaken without legislation. It is not a matter on which we have dictated the appropriate position to be taken by either party. They have met together. Instead, we have made ourselves available and only intervened as necessary to help the parties mutually achieve an agreement which fully respects the public interest.

The public is well served by this significant new initiative and I wish, as I know all members of the House will wish, the Canadian Auto Workers' legal services plan and those plans that may succeed it across Ontario in the future every success in the years ahead.

Mr. McClellan: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Given that standing order 28 requires that ministerial statements deal with short, factual statements of government policy or ministry action, and since it is clear from the statement that neither the government nor the ministry had anything to do with this initiative, why does it qualify as a ministerial statement?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. With respect, there is a certain amount of time for statements.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Hon. Mr. Riddell: As members of the House are well aware, farmers in Ontario have been hurt by the current trade war between the European Community and the United States, as well as by a number of trade actions and support programs of the American government. Important sectors of our agricultural community are concerned about the damage that could be caused by a so-called free trade agreement with our neighbour to the south.

In an attempt to overcome existing problems and head off new ones, I have been working closely with the federal government, as well as other provincial administrations. I have also discussed trade irritants on a number of occasions with individual US state agricultural officials and with the members of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

As a continuation of this communication process, I visited Washington yesterday, with the assistance of the Canadian Embassy. My purpose was twofold. I wanted to give them a first-hand account of the concerns of the Ontario agriculture and food sector, and I also wanted to find out more about their concerns about our agricultural policies.

During my one-day visit, I met with senior officials of the Senate agriculture committee, as well as Democratic Congressman Kika de la Garza, the chairman of the House agriculture committee. In addition, I had discussions with the ranking Republican on the House committee, Congressman Ed Madigan, as well as Congressman Charles Stenholm, the chairman of the House subcommittee on livestock, dairy and poultry. On the administration side, I met with Peter Myers, the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, and a number of other senior US Department of Agriculture officials.

Equally important, I also met with representatives of major US farm organizations such as the National Cattlemen's Association, the National Pork Producers' Council, the National Corn Growers' Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National American Wholesale Grocers' Association.

I believe my American counterparts gained insights into the challenges and opportunities facing Ontario agriculture and food. I also made them well aware of the impact their programs have on Ontario agriculture.

After meeting with these key American agricultural decision-makers, it is clear that we must forcefully ensure that the federal government is representing the interests of Ontario farmers in trade matters. The federal government has a lot of work left to do in making sure Ontario's agricultural interests are made known.

As Canada's largest agricultural province, we must work to ensure that our successful national and provincial agricultural support systems are not bargained away under any free trade deal. Agriculture and food are major components in Ontario's economy. It is our second-largest industry next to autos and auto parts.

The Ontario agriculture sector needs a clear signal from Ottawa that marketing boards and seasonal tariffs, which are essential parts of our farm support network, remain protected under any freer trade arrangement.

In Washington, I made these concerns clear. I found that the American farm leaders are also concerned about the potential impact of free trade on some sectors of the American agricultural community. We also discussed a number of other important trade issues such as the US countervail against Canadian pork, the Canadian countervail against US corn, the US countervail against Canadian flowers and the current US investigation into Canadian beef.

I now have a better understanding of their position and they have a better understanding of ours.

I found some American agricultural leaders have a general lack of information and serious misconceptions about Ontario agriculture overall and some of the trade issues in particular.

By keeping the lines of communication open and showing a willingness to co-operate with our neighbours, we can work out some of our differences and improve the overall state of agriculture. I will be continuing this process by meeting with key representatives of state departments of agriculture next month in Saskatchewan to continue my effort to get Ontario's point of view across and work out differences with our neighbours.

As members of the Legislature will recognize, we cannot solve all of our problems overnight. All these meetings are a step in the right direction. We must work together to solve the long-term problems of the agricultural sector being caused by current international trading problems. If agriculture is to return to a healthy state, we must solve the underlying challenges.

In the meantime, this government remains committed to helping farmers survive during these troubled times. We have increased spending on agriculture by 58 per cent in less than two years and have introduced 60 new programs and initiatives to help the agriculture and food sectors.

We will continue to use this two-pronged approach, working to find long-term solutions while providing short-term help.

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AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I wish to inform the members of my intention to introduce later today the Automobile Insurance Act. This is another

step in our overall strategy to ensure equity and fairness for consumers.

This act provides the legislative framework to enforce the interim control of automobile insurance premiums that I ordered on April 23, 1987.

As members know, on April 23 I ordered that the rates for all automobile insurance categories be capped at the levels in force on that date. As was detailed earlier, the cap provides that the rate related to a specific class or factor used to set premiums by individual insurance companies cannot increase beyond its level on April 23, 1987.

I would also note that consumers' premiums can only be set on the basis of criteria and procedures in place on April 23, unless different rules would lower premiums. In other words, an insurance company cannot create new rules subsequent to April 23 which could result in a consumer being shifted to a different, higher category.

The cap was necessary to prevent increases in anticipation of the establishment of the rate review board.

In order to ensure compliance immediately after April 23, all automobile insurance companies have been directed to file rate information with the superintendent of insurance, including criteria and procedures used to determine rates as of April 23, 1987.

The legislation I will be introducing today will also give enhanced powers to verify rates, with appropriate penalties for noncompliance.

The cap applies to all components of motor vehicle insurance: liability insurance, collision and comprehensive insurance, accident benefits, special perils and policy endorsements.

On April 23, I also ordered a 10 per cent reduction in rates for taxicabs insured through the Ontario Facility Association and for male drivers under the age of 25. These groups have experienced particularly serious rate increases and are deserving of special consideration. As well, for those taxis not in the Facility Association, insurance companies are prohibited from charging more than Facility Association rates.

Auto insurance companies will be required to compensate a policyholder for any reduction or for any amount paid that exceeds the capped rate. Compensation will be made by either refund or a credit.

It is the government's intention that these transitional measures remain in effect until the establishment and operation of an independent rate review board and insurance advocate, and the other consumer protection initiatives.

Today's proposed act is one in a long series of reforms which the government has announced and will continue to work towards.

We are also looking at no-fault insurance through the inquiry headed by Mr. Justice Coulter Osborne, which will report by November 1.

The Ontario Law Reform Commission is also examining several issues and, as I announced on April 23, we will be introducing a consumer protection law in the automobile repair industry. Legislation has already been passed dealing with a number of Dr. Slater's recommendations.

In closing, I would like to reiterate to the members that the act I will be introducing today is one part of a total approach to consumer protection. It is this government's intention to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that consumers receive fair and equitable insurance coverage at a fair and reasonable price.

RESPONSES

HEALTH RESEARCH

Mr. Andrewes: I want to thank the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) for reminding us of the proliferation of research programs recently announced by the Liberal cabinet campaign team.

Research is fundamental to the support of an integrated health care system in Ontario, and certainly we want to make sure it is an effective and efficient system. What the minister must keep in mind is that the working relationships with professionals are also a very important ingredient in making that system effective and efficient.

There are many cracks in that dike. The minister's failure to deal effectively and fairly with psychiatrists and other health care workers at provincial mental health centres and his compulsion to deal piecemeal with his announcements on the health professions review are really doing nothing to patch the cracks in that dike.

LEGAL SERVICES PLAN

Mr. O'Connor: I want to sincerely congratulate the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) for his good sense and good judgement in staying out of the dispute between the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Canadian Auto Workers. It was resolved to everybody's satisfaction. Congratulations to him.

The message is clear. Will the minister take similar advice and begin to butt out of the dispute between the judges and his ministry? Will he butt out of the dispute with the lawyers over their Queen's Counsels? Will he butt out of the dispute

with the crown attorneys over their salaries? Will he stop being disruptive? Will he take his own advice of today, get out of these situations and allow them to be resolved to the satisfaction of the parties involved?

AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Mr. Stevenson: I want to say to the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) that I am pleased he followed the lead of the member for Hastings-Peterborough (Mr. Pollock) and went to Washington to speak on behalf of Ontario agriculture. I see he met with Charles Stenholm, one of the same people with whom the member for Hastings-Peterborough met. I only hope he does not do for Ontario agriculture the same thing the Premier (Mr. Peterson) did for softwood lumber in northern Ontario.

About three or four weeks ago—I wish I had the paper here—I think he was quoted in the London Free Press as saying he had no involvement in the free trade talks and no knowledge of what was going on. Today he says he has been involved in the free trade discussion. It is interesting to note, in one of the latest issues of the paper Ontario Farmer, there is a big story on how free trade could hurt Ontario agriculture. The final paragraph, however, states very clearly that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food states and believes strongly the status quo is not an option. Very clearly, the message has gone from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food here in Ontario to Ottawa to sign some sort of deal with the Americans. That message is loud and clear.

The other thing is that he allowed the release of a research article on supply management in dairy, one of the most damning indictments of supply management. Very clearly, that is going to be quoted by the opposition of supply management for many years. The timing of the release of that research material could not possibly have been worse. Then, a week or two later, the minister stated in a speech in southwestern Ontario that the Ontario dairy industry could compete.

I sincerely hope the people with whom the minister met in the United States have not been following the agricultural press here in Ontario, because they will be very confused about what sort of message is coming from the government of Ontario on trade with the US.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Ashe: I want to respond briefly to the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) for finally putting some legislation before us,

although it would appear to me that the Automobile Insurance Act of 1987 has nothing to do with the establishment of the rate review board. Is that correct? It is a little late. It would appear this bill is putting into legislation the knee-jerk reaction of the minister and the government to try to freeze rates; to give an impression of freezing and reducing rates. At least we will see on paper what he has in mind.

The minister and I know that the supposed freezing of rates on April 23 is a complete charade. Companies within the insurance industry establish their rate policy for the year in February, which really means the increases for 1987 were already established and in place in February and effective March 1, 1987; freezing them as of new policies beyond April 23 does not mean a thing. When are the minister and this government going to stand up and be counted and be honest, clear and forthright with the consumers in this province?

HEALTH RESEARCH

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Very briefly, we welcome the announcement from the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston). We agree that further research in the province is important. I only wish that large amounts of money were being put into community-based mental health programs in our province. I also wish the minister would start looking at a multidisciplinary approach, especially to mental health in this province.

It is my understanding that just a few weeks ago the minister made a final decision that psychologists would not be covered by the Ontario health insurance plan. They are disappointed and we in this party are very disappointed as well.

1410

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: Obviously, I want to comment on the statement made by the the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter). It is political posturing at its worst. The cap is meaningless, and everyone, even the minister, knows now that the end result of what he is doing will mean that rates are going to go up this year and go up substantially.

He made the announcement on April 23. He tried to leave the impression that somehow or other this was going to freeze rates. Unfortunately, the superintendent of insurance announced a day or two later that rates up to April 23 would probably have increased by two per cent per month. Anybody who renews his insurance in

May of this year is going to pay 22 per cent more than he did last year. If the superintendent of insurance is right, it means that rates in this province this year, the total paid in premiums by motorists, will be \$400 million higher than they were last year.

If the minister had been sincere in wanting to do something for motorists instead of posturing, he would have frozen those rates and said, "After April 23, no one is going to pay any more for insurance than he paid last year." That would have had some meaning to it.

The 10 per cent reduction to the young people is just as phony. They all have a 20 per cent or 25 per cent increase and then that will be reduced by 10 per cent, so they will still have a substantial increase.

As to taxis, it is even worse because almost all taxi insurance came due on May 1. The cap was on April 23. That means taxi drivers on average will have a 24 per cent increase over that period of time, reduced by 10 per cent, so they can all look at a 14 per cent increase. Again, if the minister were sincere, he would have frozen those taxi rates at the level they were at last May 1 and would not have allowed this kind of increase.

If the insurance companies do not like this and if any of them say, "We are not going to abide by it," they can cancel the insurance, can they not? There is nothing in the bill to say they have to provide insurance, so there will be all kinds of people going to Facility by the action the minister is proposing today.

The minister himself said that putting in a rate review board will increase rates by eight per cent to 39 per cent. If he had been sincere, he could have used section 371 and done all this to freeze rates. That is what he should have done if it were to have meaning. What he really should be doing is announcing that a public auto insurance plan is going to be put in place in this province to give real savings to motorists and abolish discrimination, and he should be freezing the rates until it is in place. That would have had some meaning. What the minister is proposing here has not a milligram of meaning to it.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE

Mr. Hayes: I would like to respond to the statement by the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) with regard to his trip to Washington to discuss agricultural issues and free trade.

I am very pleased the minister made the statement that he does not want our national or provincial programs or support systems bar-

gained away under any free trade deal. At the same time, I am terribly displeased that the minister has not stated that he is opposed to agriculture even being discussed in the free trade talks. He knows that our supply management or marketing boards, in the eyes of the Americans, are unfair competition. That would also be in the free trade talks. We are strongly opposed to it and I wish the minister would take that stand.

EDUCATION FUNDING

Mr. Grossman: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege: I wish to draw to the attention of the House an inaccuracy with regard to some figures that our party laid before the House earlier this week and to have an opportunity to correct them.

During the course of what I consider to be very appropriate and important questions, which still remain, on the issue of funding public and separate schools and whether sufficient moneys have been given to the public school system or the separate school system, we obtained figures from the Ministry of Education. In fact, it has turned out that the figures we obtained from the Ministry of Education, and they are obtainable from no other source, were correct with regard to the grants actually given by the ministry, but incorrect with regard to the actual educationally approved and needed requests from the boards.

In this case, the information we obtained from the ministry was reversed, i.e., indicating that the separate school boards had requested less than the public school boards.

This error was discovered only after ministry officials told reporters our data was incorrect. The minister had the opportunity on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, because we raised it on both days, to obtain the information from his ministry. It was not available. None the less, our party put forward the questions. I want to inform the House that it was not our intention to provide inaccurate information and, to the extent that information was inaccurate, we wish to apologize.

By way of making the record entirely accurate, we would remind members that this accident occurred due to an understandable human error. The fact is the information is not available from any source other than the Ministry of Education. It is not information that can be doublechecked by any other source. We simply have to rely, as does the public, on the information obtained from the ministry.

In this case, the information, as it came from the ministry, appeared to have been reversed in one particular area. For that, to the extent that we

have no opportunity but to relay that forward, we apologize as the party having raised it in the House. I take full responsibility for that and, to that extent, I wish to apologize to the House for the misunderstanding.

RICHARD SNELL

Hon. Mr. Riddell: It is with great sadness and a deep personal sense of loss that I rise to inform the honourable members of the passing of an outstanding public servant. Richard Snell was director of communications in my ministry and a valued colleague of mine. I am sure the four former Ministers of Agriculture and Food he served will echo my sentiments.

Dick had a distinguished career as one of the country's top journalists, as attested to by the National Newspaper Awards and numerous other honours he received before joining the Ontario government in 1967. For 13 years he directed the communications programs of the Ontario Housing Corp. and the Ministry of Housing. In 1980, he joined the cabinet office as communications co-ordinator. For the past five years he was the driving force behind the award-winning communications programs of my ministry.

Dick was a professional in every sense of the word who met each challenge with enthusiasm and unfailing good humour. I know I speak for his many friends and admirers, his colleagues and co-workers when I say his presence and his contribution will be sorely missed. I know members of this House will join me in expressing condolences to Dick's wife, Heather, and other members of his family.

Mr. Andrewes: Just briefly, as one of those former ministers the member alluded to in his comments, I want to say a word or two about Dick Snell, who was a co-worker of mine while I was at that ministry.

Dick Snell was a gentleman, which I think was fundamental to his personality. He had an acute understanding of people's feelings, whether they were the feelings of people he was working with on a daily basis or those of his friends.

He started his career at Queen's Park in 1958 as a member of the gallery, working for the Toronto Star. It was unusual even in those days for members of the gallery, particularly members of the gallery who were associated with that well-known journalistic corporation, to compromise themselves by taking employment with Conservative administrations. However, Dick Snell did that in 1968 or so when he became the director of communications for the Ontario Housing Corp. That career continued to the

present day, latterly with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, where our association began.

I think the most significant indication of the respect people had for Dick Snell was the fact that his colleagues at the Ministry of Agriculture and Food saw fit, as a demonstration of their affection and their respect, to start a bursary in his name that would sponsor a journalism student at Carleton University.

It is with a great deal of sympathy, on behalf of my caucus, that we offer our condolences to Dick Snell's family.

Mr. Speaker: On your behalf, I will make certain that when Hansard is printed, these words of sympathy will be sent to the Snell family.

1420

ORAL QUESTIONS

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Grossman: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. He will know that for several weeks last session the two opposition parties were pressuring him to allow the pass-through of the \$150 increase in payments for the disabled, offered by the federal government, to flow through to the disabled in Ontario. He refused to do that at the time, arguing that there was a federal impediment due to the agreement between the provincial government and the federal government.

I now have in hand a copy of the letter sent by the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Mr. Epp, to each of the provincial ministers responsible. It was sent out earlier this week, and I presume the minister now has it.

He will know that this letter, which I will read into the record if necessary, specifically and directly authorizes him not to treat the payments as income, which would remove the impediment he talks about, and makes it clear, to use the words of the letter, that, "Provinces will then have the freedom to pass on these federal increases and continue to receive cost-sharing for social assistance programs." This is specifically the instruction and the change made in the letter he received this week.

Given this removal of the federal impediment, would the minister now undertake to send the money he has been holding back for so many months to the 13,000 disabled?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I indicated to the honourable member last evening that the other aspect of this question was the equity with the other 70,000 disabled in this province.

Let me quote a section of the minister's letter: "It was not until January 1987, when I had a sufficient number of responses to my August letter, that it became apparent to me the necessary changes provinces would have to make to their programs in order to pass on the increase could, in fact, result in significant additional provincial expenditures. Any increase in social assistance rates would have to be applied to all disabled social assistance recipients and not just to the Canada pension plan disability beneficiaries. This would result in higher social assistance rates and a greatly expanded number of recipients."

In other words, the federal minister is clearly recognizing the discrepancy that would be created between the 70,000 who receive provincial benefits and the 13,000 who receive federal benefits. I have indicated to the member before that it seems to me to be unfair and inappropriate that we direct that money to one small segment.

I have indicated before that during the process when this took place, we directed some of these funds to all the disabled, and I can assure the member that we are going to direct some of the other funds.

Mr. Grossman: I want to read to the minister the answer he gave the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) on February 4, 1987.

He said, and I quote directly from Hansard: "The member surely understands there is a mandatory agreement between the province and the federal government that all income has to be taken into consideration with respect to assistance programs. If they switch, we have no choice."

Those were the minister's words. This letter goes on to switch. The federal government specifically does what he said it had to do, and thereafter, he said, he would have no choice.

I will quote from the minister's letter: "The barrier to the passing on of the CPP increases has been the possibility the provinces would have to incur significant additional costs. I am therefore confident that all provinces will pass on these increases now that they can be assured that they will not incur any additional costs in doing so."

The federal minister has specifically removed the single barrier the provincial minister raised, and he says so in this letter. Given the fact that the single barrier to 13,000 disabled people receiving the federal money in this province has now been removed, will the minister give an undertaking today to pass on that money to the disabled in Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Contained in the minister's previous letter was a request to us that we not withdraw from those people the benefits that accrue to them because they were on the family benefits allowance plan. I indicated to the federal minister, in my response to him in January, that we intended to do exactly that, but I also pointed out to him:

"While I am pleased that I am able to respond to your suggestions that social assistance clients be protected for major expense items, I wish to express my disappointment that the grandfathering of FBA cases for CPP and the Spouses Allowance are not cost-shareable.

"By your very suggestion, you appear to concur with us that these are cases in need. However, we are unable to continue cost-sharing for these cases unless we administer a very detailed and burdensome needs test."

The point I am trying to make to the honourable member is that the federal minister asked us in August to do certain things. We have done those things, but we do them at full cost to us.

The second point is that I clearly indicated to the federal minister that it would be inappropriate to pass on an increase to one segment of that population and not to the others, that I would much prefer to take that total sum of money and pass it on to all the disabled in this province.

Mr. Grossman: The minister can try to mix this up with bureaucratic gobbledegook, but the fact remains that other provinces have passed on the federal money to the disabled people in their provinces. The fact remains that the federal minister today has specifically authorized the minister to do that. The fact remains the federal government removed the sole impediment he referred to earlier.

Finally, we got this quote from the minister the last time he tried to defend this, on February 11. In response to my question, he said: "I cannot do it for just the 13,000 who come under the jurisdiction of the Canada pension plan. That is the problem."

Today, with this letter in hand, he can specifically do it for the 13,000; he has the federal impediment removed. The disabled in this province are living on \$7,260 a year while the minister's executive assistant lives on \$40,000, \$45,000 or \$50,000 a year.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Grossman: The minister has the money sent to him by the feds. He has a lot of money available in the budget of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). He has no impediment to doing it.

Mr. Speaker: Does the member have a question?

Mr. Grossman: Why does the minister not give that relief to the disabled people in this province?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: Not only will we give that money; we will give more than that money to the disabled, but we will give it to all the disabled. The member will remember that in his letter the federal minister clearly indicates it is up to the individual provinces to decide how to allocate that money. We will allocate it and we will allocate it more fairly than the member would.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would remind members this is question-and-answer period and the chair always tries to get the opportunity for as many members as possible to ask questions.

Mr. Grossman: Since the federal minister's letter authorizes the minister to do that January 1, 1987, we expect that to happen today, effective January 1.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would like to remind the member that the standing orders allow the Leader of the Opposition to ask two questions, so do you have a question?

Mr. Davis: Is the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) going to take that money too? He tried to take the Wintario money.

Mr. Grossman: Win Ontario is what we plan to do.

LAND TRANSFER TAX

Mr. Grossman: My question is to the Minister of Revenue. In August 1985, a sale of all the Gulf assets in Ontario was made to Petro-Canada. That sale closed in the spring of 1986. In an affidavit filed by the director of the tax branch at Petro-Canada, it is indicated that in a private meeting with the oil company Petrocan, the minister and his officials agreed to accept land transfer taxes on land which was valued at \$525,000 but his staff agreed to collect land transfer tax based upon \$39,000.

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We are told this agreement was reached between Petrocan and the Ministry of Revenue officials with the minister's consent and approval, which he is allowed to do under the legislation. The net result of this is that the minister excluded Petrocan from paying about \$3,800 in taxes on one parcel of land. There are

about 500 parcels of land in Ontario subject to the same transaction.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Grossman: Could the minister explain to the House why he decided to give Petrocan such a significant waiver on land transfer tax payable to his ministry?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I will have to look into the details of the discussions that the honourable member has described, without giving me any notice, and I will report to the House.

Mr. Grossman: May I say to the Treasurer that this is a very significant transaction involving, we are told, about 500 Gulf outlets in Ontario. This is an extraordinary situation, because the minister will know he does not very often exercise his power to waive or reduce land transfer tax. In fact, I expect he has done it only once or twice. Therefore, I would have expected the minister would have reported to this House, or elsewhere, the fact that he had decided to give Petrocan such a significant alteration in land transfer tax payable long before this question was raised.

If the minister does not have all the details, he surely remembers the meeting at which he and his officials agreed to give Petrocan such a significant tax break. Could he report to us the reasoning behind his decision to give it such a significant tax exemption?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I hope Mr. Speaker will permit me to say that in a matter such as this, when there is a specific instance that has not been a subject of any particular discussion, I do not recall the details. If the honourable member wished me to be in possession of the details, he might very well have given me notice, which is the customary way to proceed in matters of this type. I simply reiterate the fact that I am not in a position to give him the details now; I do not recall them. I will refresh my memory and provide the honourable member with the information.

Mr. Grossman: Under section 17 of the Land Transfer Tax Act, this becomes the minister's specific responsibility. I find it inconceivable that he would have had a meeting with the Petrocan officials, that he would have dealt with 500 and perhaps 514 outlets, making an arrangement to allow them to pay something other than market value on the land as shown on the deeds, and yet does not seem to remember the discussion. Surely it is not unfair for us to come to this House to ask for the reasoning behind that.

I have not asked him today to give us the specifics of how much tax he waived or how much the land specifically was worth. We have simply asked him this afternoon to tell us what his reasoning was behind a situation which may well have cost his government \$2 million in tax revenue. Surely it is not beyond his capability to report to this House, without notice, as to why he would have said to an oil company in Ontario that he was going to relieve it of perhaps as much as \$2 million in taxes. Would the Treasurer undertake today to table tomorrow—not Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday—the list of all the properties involved in this transaction—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the member take his seat. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, no.
Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There are other members who would like to ask questions.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: If you wish to waste the time, that is fine.

PENSION FUNDS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Financial Institutions—if I may say, the best friend the New Democratic Party ever had—not about the insurance ripoff but about the pension ripoff, which he also presides over.

On Tuesday, I asked the minister a question about the \$73.5 million that Ontario Hydro took out of its surplus funds to write off its 1986 pension contributions. The minister said Hydro had to take the \$73.5 million because it was there; it had no choice.

I want to ask the minister whether he is aware that in 1986, our old friends at the Toronto-Dominion Bank took \$46.1 million in cash from their surplus funds and put it into their pockets, and an additional \$23 million from the surplus was used to write off their 1986 pension contributions, for a total ripoff of \$69 million. Is the minister aware of that?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The House leader of the third party was incorrect when he said I said they would have to take the money out because it was there. What happened, as he knows, was that we had a situation where they removed the funds. I do not know the specific details, but what I said to him was that sometimes, under the federal income tax statutes, they must take a contribution holiday.

What was happening was that in that particular case there was the provision, which was exer-

cised, that they could refer it to the courts. The Supreme Court ruled that they were right. All I was saying was that the decision had been made, and surely he was not suggesting that I overrule the courts.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. My left ear is starting to hurt.

Mr. McClellan: The minister repeated the fatuous answer to Tuesday's question, but he did not answer my question about the Toronto-Dominion Bank. I assume he knows nothing about it.

Let me ask by way of supplementary, since I have the Toronto-Dominion Bank's minutes for its pension fund society's annual general meeting of February 1987, whether the minister is aware that the cumulative rate of return for the Toronto-Dominion Bank's pension funds over the last five-year period, according to McLeod Young Weir, is 20.1 per cent, at the same time that the cumulative consumer price index rate was 5.1 per cent. The Toronto-Dominion Bank employees have no indexed pensions.

Does the minister think it makes any sense at all that the Toronto-Dominion Bank or any other company is allowed to earn such tremendous profits on the funds of pension contributors, at the same time denying them indexed pensions and ripping them off for \$69 million out of their own surplus pension fund accounts?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I think everyone should know that before any withdrawals can be taken from a pension fund, they must apply to the Pension Commission of Ontario. Before the pension commission would even consider any withdrawal of surplus or a contribution holiday, it must be satisfied that, actuarially, all the obligations of that pension plan are protected to a level of 125 per cent. Under a defined benefit plan, all the obligations of that plan are met, plus 25 per cent, so the plan members are certainly not at risk.

We have the alternative, as I have suggested. Once the pension commission rules, if those members of the plan object to the ruling, they have access to the courts, which is exactly what happened in the case the member mentioned. That is where we are on it.

Mr. McClellan: Instead of forcing workers to go to court to stop the theft of their own money, which the minister is permitting, why does he not simply accept the logic of common sense and accept our amendments to Bill 170 which would make it impossible for companies, if I may say,

to steal surplus pension funds and instead require them to use the earnings on the workers' pensions contributions to pay for inflation protection?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The House leader of the third party will know that we have set up a committee under Professor Martin Friedland which is looking at exactly that issue. It is looking at the issue of indexing, it is looking at the issue of surplus, and it will report back to us with its recommendation. It is something that is in hand and is being addressed.

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RENT REGULATION

Mr. Reville: I have some new questions for the minister of the new swamp. That is the Minister of Housing. Swamps seem to grow in that row.

During the rent review debate, the minister said over and over again that the statutory guideline was so good that landlords would not go to rent review much and that if they did, tenants would get a streamlined rent review process. There are over 18,000 applications for rent review, compared to just over 2,000 in 1986 and 1,700 in 1984. There are, at most, only 300 rent review administrators. How can the minister possibly keep his promise of a streamlined rent review process, given that each one of these 18,000 applications is going to take 90 days at least?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member mentioned that 18,000 applications are before us now. The honourable member failed to say that 15,000 of those would never come before any board to be heard because they are post-1975 applications. We have to say that because we were steadfast in bringing about Bill 51, these people, who normally would have had increases of 20 per cent, 30 per cent, 40 per cent and sometimes 50 per cent without any redress, today have a process where they can be addressed. Not only that, we have a guideline of 5.2 per cent, and any landlord who requires more than the guideline must justify those increases before the board.

Mr. Reville: The minister is continuing to say that tenants will not get large increases. During the debate, he kept talking about average increases of 4.7 per cent. What does the minister have to say about these facts? There are 2,522 buildings applying for increases of between 10.4 per cent and 25 per cent, and 1,767 landlords are asking for increases of over 25 per cent. Where does his 4.7 per cent stand now?

Hon. Mr. Curling: May I just take a moment and tell the members that when I first came into the House, the honourable member was way ahead of me in housing details. I bow to that. It took about six months to realize that what he knew about housing was more damaging to the tenants out there than what we have today. What I am saying to my honourable friend is that we have a guideline and a process by which any landlord can come forward with a 50 per cent, 60 per cent or 80 per cent increase, but he cannot have that increase unless it is justified. I am asking the member not to use those scare tactics on the tenants, saying they are in for 20 per cent or 30 per cent increases. Landlords must justify those before the hearings board.

Mr. Reville: I do not feel better, and I do not think the tenants at 833 Kennedy Road feel better either. They got a 30 per cent rent increase justified last year. Their landlord is asking for another 14 per cent this year. I know they write to the minister all the time and they say he never responds, or if he does they do not know what he is saying. Will the minister rise in the House and say to the tenants of Ontario that he was kidding, that rent increases are going to be high and that in fact there are going to be intolerable delays because his system just does not work?

Hon. Mr. Curling: What we saw in Bill 51 was fair treatment and protection for tenants. The member said it failed; but if the honourable member were to go out on the streets or to his tenants, they would say this bill is not only the best bill we have seen in Ontario but also the best bill we have seen in North America.

Mr. Swart: Go for the world.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: Not world class?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As a matter of fact, it is quite possible. It could be the best in the world. It is not a perfect bill but it goes a long way in addressing the injustices that were done to tenants before. I am sorry if tenants in the member's riding did not get a reply from me, but I have written thousands of letters back. I make sure I respond to them all and I will continue to respond to them all.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There seems to be a somewhat jovial but restless attitude around here today. Maybe all members will stay calm so we can complete question period.

LAND TRANSFER TAX

Mr. Grossman: I have another question for the Minister of Revenue. We have an affidavit

from the manager of development for Petrocan who says that the subject property, which I referred to earlier, at the corner of Eglinton Avenue and McCowan Road in Toronto, was worth \$525,000 in August 1985 but that it paid tax subsequently on \$39,000. This was at a time when the minister was raising the land transfer tax for all individual people around the province, but he was in the process of reducing the tax for Petrocan.

The other affidavit we have reads as follows: "I sought agreement from the Ontario Ministry of Revenue, pursuant to section 17 of the act, for payment pursuant to the plan which I had devised." This is an employee of Petrocan. "The scheme was acceptable to the minister, who agreed the tax might be paid on this basis and accepted payment of land transfer taxes pursuant to the Petrocan plan."

Given all this history, why will the minister not table all the information on the 500 or so sites in Ontario so we can all see for ourselves how much tax he gave away? Why will he not table that?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In case the Leader of the Opposition is suffering under any misapprehension, nothing is done by the Ministry of Revenue in cases such as this that does not include full public knowledge. He asked me, as his second supplementary a moment ago, whether I would table this material tomorrow. I said no, because I have to find out what the material is, and as far as we are concerned the House is not available for tabling tomorrow as far as that goes. I indicated to the Leader of the Opposition that as soon as I had apprised myself of the facts and had got the material, I would respond to him in the House or any other place.

Mr. Grossman: In the event it has to be any other place, I wonder whether the Treasurer will be kind enough to assure us that the details his ministry surely has—I would not believe for a second that he would have blindly waived land transfer tax on 514 major sites in Ontario without knowing specifically the pieces of land, the valuation on those lands and the taxes he was accepting instead of—

Mr. Speaker: The question?

Mr. Grossman: I have not asked the question.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Oh, God.

Mr. Grossman: I know the Treasurer is eager these days. I know parliament is a drag for him. I understand.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Grossman: As this is all available in his ministry, would he be kind enough to assure us that if the House is not sitting tomorrow, and it will not be, we may send people over to his ministry and obtain a list, which I am sure is available this afternoon, of the 500 properties and the land transfer tax paid? In the spirit of freedom of information that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) talks about but does not practise, will he make it available to us tomorrow?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: No. I will make the answer available right here in the House, where the question was asked.

1450

PROPERTY SPECULATION

Mr. Laughren: I have a question for the Treasurer. The Treasurer will recall that a couple of weeks ago, in an act of unparalleled generosity, the opposition gave him another couple of weeks to get his budget together. On this side, we were hoping he would use that time to introduce an element of fairness to his budget. Even though the Treasurer dismissed rather out of hand our proposal for a tax on land speculation, I wonder whether he has had a chance to reconsider that in view of the following example?

In December 1986, at 5 Massey Square in East York, a condominium was bought for \$77,900. Four months later, in April 1987, it was sold for \$107,900. That was a profit of a neat \$30,000 in four months. If a worker in this province works an entire year, earns \$30,000 and has four dependents, that taxpayer pays about \$6,500 in combined federal and provincial tax. On the sale of the home, the tax assessed would be zero.

Mr. Speaker: You are coming to a question, are you?

Mr. Laughren: Will the Treasurer tell us how he thinks that is fair and why he cannot do something about it?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would be very glad if this could have been the day the budget was read. Then the criticisms that might flow from the budget, although I cannot imagine what they would be, would be responded to by myself and my colleagues. It is as nearly perfect as a budget can be, but there may be some flaws that the honourable member will be able to detect since the public is paying him to do that. But for now, I am going to have to forego the pleasure of responding to a specific request for information that is in fact associated with the budget.

Mr. Laughren: That sounds encouraging because last week he was dismissing our proposal out of hand.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I thought I said all these things were under discussion.

Mr. Laughren: It is all right. Successes come in small doses for the opposition. The Treasurer understands that.

Just in case this component of fairness does not get into his budget, will the Treasurer table any information he has on why such a proposal is not workable, since he seemed to dismiss it? I am a little nervous that it will not make its way into the budget. Will the Treasurer table any information he has on the whole question of the speculation tax?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I suppose that most of the information I have is based on my experience as a long-term member of the House and as a taxpayer in the province. I look at how effective the speculation tax was when it was applied by the previous government. It was described by some noted observers as chaotic and resulted in a royal commission because of special decisions made by the then Minister of Revenue to relieve individuals of special tax responsibilities. The royal commissioner did not recommend that criminal charges be laid.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mr. Ward: I have a question for the Minister of Labour. The minister will be aware that workers at Stelco recently rejected a tentative settlement reached in early negotiations with the company. Can the minister give this House any information on this situation?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: There have been negotiations for the collective agreement with Stelco that expires on July 31 of this year. Those negotiations began on March 2. As the honourable member and the House will know, the purpose of the negotiations is to secure an early settlement and to preserve orders at Stelco in the light of very severe competitive pressures. A tentative settlement was reached and, regrettably, rejected by four locals in Hamilton and Brantford about a week and a half ago. The union has since held a strike vote and been given a mandate to strike by the membership. At the present time, I am advised that the union bargaining team is meeting with the membership in an effort to ascertain a clear indication of its wishes before the negotiations resume.

Mr. Ward: There has been a great deal of speculation that if the parties are unable to settle this dispute, there could be substantial losses of contracts and subsequent potential layoffs in the Hamilton area. What specific actions is his

ministry taking to ensure that negotiations do not break down?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I must say at the outset that I share the member's concern, and I think it is a concern shared by all of the parties in this matter, that layoffs might occur if a settlement is not reached in an expeditious fashion. In that regard, we have offered our assistance throughout the bargaining. Currently, we are offering the assistance of the director of mediation and conciliation, Trevor Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson has met with the parties throughout these discussions and continues to be available for further discussions.

I am very hopeful that the negotiations and discussions between the parties will be able to resume within the next week or so, and Mr. Stevenson remains available for a call from the parties to get back to the bargaining table at the earliest possible time.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: My question is for the Minister of Housing. A moment ago he said that this may be the best bill tenants have ever seen. I remind him that under his bill they do not even get an automatic right to a hearing. It is possible that a tenant will not even be able to evaluate this bill because he will not be able to sit down and look at a hearing process.

It is very clear that there are going to be significant increases as a result of Bill 51. Significant increases even as high as 40 per cent are being suggested. Given that his bill calls for the upfront payment of those increases for thousands of tenants across Ontario and that those payments may go on almost indefinitely, and given that his backlog in his ministry could be backed up for as long as two or three years, what action is the minister personally taking now within his ministry to ensure that tenants in Ontario are not being hurt by the delays he is causing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I repeat to the honourable member that many tenants were not protected before, especially in post-1975 buildings, and he is asking what provisions we are making. I empathize with the member, in that he is a new critic and has most of this thing totally wrong—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Curling: It does not take one day. It takes 90 days to review a case and the tenants have an opportunity to look at it for 40 days. I am asking whether the member is saying that we should take away the right of the tenant to review that application. There is a process in place.

There will be no backlog. We have put things in place and it is working very well.

Mr. Jackson: I am asking the minister what action he is taking because of this horrendous backlog. These are real people we are talking about. Most of these tenants who are at high risk are senior citizens and they are being harmed directly by the mismanagement of this program. I want him to take one case, the case of Archie and Mary Dodd of Burlington who live in the Diplomat apartment building. The owners in that building have applied for a 33 per cent rent increase under his bill. Mr. Dodd is 82 years old. He is currently paying 50 per cent of his total income towards his rent and will be paying 67 per cent when that increase is approved.

Mr. Speaker: And the question?

Mr. Jackson: Currently he owes his landlord \$1,000 retroactively and in six months he is going to owe—

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Jackson: —\$1,968.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Do you have a question?

Mr. Jackson: I have a question.

Mr. Speaker: If you look at Hansard, you will see you have already asked a question at the beginning; make it fast.

Mr. Jackson: What is the minister going to do for the Dodd family and for thousands of tenants in Ontario who are waiting for action from him to overcome the backlog that is occurring because of his inability to handle his own piece of rent review legislation?

1500

Hon. Mr. Curling: I think the honourable member has asked what is the definition for backlog or another word. There was neglect for years by that party, not taking any action to protect those tenants. It was also in 1975 that they deliberately excluded those people from protection. It was a deliberate action by this government to bring those tenants under protection and to make sure there can be redress.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I ask all members to show a little more respect for those asking questions and for those responding.

Interjection.

Order. The member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) does not listen very well. New question, the member for Scarborough West.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: At least under the old system we actually had a system. Now we do not.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services and goes back to this whole question of the Canada pension plan pass-through. In the emotion of the minister's last response to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman), he indicated there were going to be large increases to the disabled in this upcoming budget and we are very pleased to hear that.

Does this mean there will be an increase that will finally bring about the promise of the now departing Premier (Mr. Peterson) when he was Leader of the Opposition that the Liberals would finally equalize the amounts for the guaranteed annual income system for the aged, for the elderly in the province, with the amount for the guaranteed annual income system for the disabled in the province as the base income those people could expect? Is that what the minister is going to do?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I did not refer to an increase in the budget. I do not know what is in the budget. What I said to the Leader of the Opposition was that the money that had accrued to the province as a result of the CPP increases, approximately \$18 million, was going to be spread over all the disabled people in the province, not just on those 13,000. We think that would be unfair, given that our program is designed to bring people up to a level that is common for all the disabled.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: A new consistency from the minister; we now have his day care policy administered to the disabled.

Will the minister be increasing the base amount that disabled people in this province receive from the \$605 a month now to at least the \$727 senior citizens receive as their base amount? Yes or no, and why not?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In the previous two budgets from this government, that gap was closed each time. I expect it will be closed again this time.

TORONTO AREA TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Gregory: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications regarding the minister's statement yesterday of the government's transportation initiatives. The statement made much of the Network 2011 proposals that include the Sheppard Avenue subway line, the Mississauga busway and Highway 407, among others. While these statements are politically appealing, they are

qualified with the condition of requiring further examination.

Is the minister simply proposing yet another transportation study that will delay these initiatives for one more year or does the government have a set agenda or timetable; and if so, can he clarify the details?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: Yesterday the member acknowledged some money we had previously allocated to Mississauga. What he seems to have trouble accepting is that this government announced \$130 million of new money, \$30 million this year and \$40 million in the subsequent two years, to the four regions of Metro, Peel, York and Durham. Those are initiatives that were on the table long before this government took office. In fact, if the previous government had been doing its job as far as this ministry is concerned, we would not have had that backlog.

Mr. Gregory: The minister seems to be taking a great deal of credit and lauding himself for this so-called \$30 million this year, \$43 million next year and so on. The minister knows as well as I do—he attends the same meetings I do—that when he went to the Ontario Good Roads Association, it let him know that its minimum requirement was \$75 million a year for five years just to maintain the roads they have without building another new road.

Now the minister is telling me that \$130 million over three years is going to take care of all the roads required for the developing areas. I assume that means Mississauga, York and so on. He is going to do all this with \$130 million when the Ontario Good Roads Association says that just to maintain what we have requires a minimum of \$75 million a year. What kind of magic tricks did he learn while he was away from here?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: The member was certainly at the Good Roads convention, but I do not think he was paying much attention. The \$75 million referred to in the report was for all of Ontario, including northern Ontario, eastern Ontario and western Ontario. The announcement yesterday spells out what is needed to meet the backlog for the four regions: three around Metro, with Metro Toronto being the fourth. It does not make reference to the balance we have included in other allocations, including the \$30 million annually in the Ontario Municipal Improvement Fund and what might come out in the budget next week.

CENTRE FOR LABOUR STUDIES

Mr. Warner: I have a question for the Minister of Colleges and Universities. The member is relieved, is he not? He should wait until I ask the question. I would like to know whether the minister agrees with the decision by Humber College to terminate the Centre for Labour Studies. If he does I would like to know why, and if he does not I would like to know what he intends to do about it.

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I am just delighted that the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is back on the scene. We have been back in this House for two weeks and I thought all the issues in the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Skills Development had been resolved. If one listens to what is coming out of either of the opposition parties, one would probably believe that.

I am sorry to tell my friend from Scarborough-Ellesmere that I am not aware of the closing of that program. I admit that. I will look into it and report back to him as soon as I have more information on it.

Mr. Warner: One can easily tell now why one need not ask a question of this minister every day. There are no answers.

I am surprised the minister is not aware that the Centre for Labour Studies is the most unique program of its type in Canada. It offers a large number of occupational health and safety courses in seven languages, antiracism programs for workers right in the work place, the largest English-as-a-second-language program in Canada, special programs for immigrant workers, and the list goes on. For a mere \$50,000 a year out of a budget of \$75 million, the college has the audacity to close down this valuable centre. I want to know whether the minister is going to protect this centre and make sure it continues to operate. Will he, yes or no?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: That is a good question. If the government were to maintain every single program that my friend the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere and all his friends on the opposition benches suggested we must maintain in that kind of determined style, we would still be living in the 19th century.

I am not aware of the termination of the centre's programs. In addition, though, many of the activities that are carried on by that centre will continue to be pursued at Humber College, as they are at every other of the 21 community colleges in the province, with the English-as-a-second-language program and programs for

immigrant women among them. These sorts of initiatives are supported not only by the Centre for Labour Studies, or whatever it was, but by a number of other initiatives, within both the programs of the colleges and programs initiated through the Ministry of Skills Development.

I regret that my friend suggests the world is coming to an end in the west end of Toronto because of the termination of that program, if indeed it is being terminated, but I will report back to him with further details on it within a few days.

1510

MARKET VALUE ASSESSMENT

Mr. McFadden: I have a question for the Minister of Revenue. Over the past day I have received numerous calls from constituents of mine—and I know a number of other members in Toronto have received similar calls—concerned about the impact market value assessment would have on their property tax. Many of the people calling are elderly people who are afraid they will lose their homes if the kinds of tax increases go through which we could have, even under the 1980 market value assessment figures.

The report provided by the Ministry of Revenue, carried out by the Ministry of Revenue and submitted to Metropolitan Toronto, states that 83,095 homes in the city of Toronto will face tax increases, while 64,868 units would face decreases. It is obvious that some very detailed work went into this in order to get those kinds of detailed figures.

Would the minister not provide to this House now the background information upon which these detailed figures were secured so that home owners being affected can see what the impact of market value would be, more particularly on their properties?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: There are no detailed figures being kept back. As a matter of fact, I want to refer to a couple of things the honourable member has been saying, because it is an extremely important and sensitive issue.

When the first impact study was done by the previous Conservative government, it paid \$3,383,590 for the detailed impact study. This was kept secret until the Liberal government took office almost two years ago. One of my first acts as Minister of Revenue was to make that public. We were requested to update that study by the chairman of metropolitan council, on behalf of the Metro Toronto Advisory Task Force on Assessment Reform. We undertook to do that at

an additional cost, not of \$3.3 million, but \$311,000.

This was done, and a detailed answer will be given in the order paper, as requested by the honourable member. There was no house-to-house reassessment; the impact of property value changes in that period of time were factored in, in the way that is apparent in the report the honourable member is brandishing.

Just a couple of days ago he was referring to that as the secret report. All this material has been made public. It is in his hands.

My report was requested by metropolitan council. It is in their hands. They are discussing it. As far as I am concerned, we are going to await their recommendations and that may take quite a while.

Mr. McClellan: In other words, this figure of 83,095 homes facing increases is taken out of the air. It is not founded on any kind of basis at all; it is some sort of illusion, a random sample. Is that what we are to understand? I suppose what is being stated here is that these figures may even be invalid.

The point is that there must be some basis for those numbers, at least on a vicinity-by-vicinity or neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood basis. I would ask the minister to provide to us more background information than we now have on how these figures were determined. The way these figures are now set up makes it impossible for a home owner to know where he stands. It makes it impossible even for metropolitan council to understand what it is voting for, based on the kinds of figures the minister has provided to date.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I am not aware that anybody is called upon to vote on anything, either now or in the immediate future. The matter is there as a report that was requested by metropolitan council and we have placed it in its hands. The reason the individual home owners do not know exactly what happens to their property is because we have not done that kind of assessment. We have done an impact study and the honourable member knows precisely what that is, because the figures associated with it have been made public.

The honourable member knows the basic assessment in the city of Toronto is based on 1940 figures, some of them much earlier than that. The metropolitan council, including Toronto, including people representing Eglinton riding at the municipal level, have requested the report and it is made available. We do not have the

impact on an address-by-address basis. It was not called for. We do not believe it is necessary.

LONG-TERM CARE

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I would like to ask the Minister of Health whether he agrees with the statement that was made in the *Globe and Mail* on April 22 by Randy Reid, an assistant deputy minister in his ministry. He said he thought it was inappropriate and inhumane for people in long-term care facilities, chronic care beds and nursing home beds to have to live in ward rooms where, by the nature of their illnesses and the nature of the facilities. We understand they will be for a long time, yet there is no privacy. It is an inhumane approach to health care.

If the minister agrees with that statement by his assistant deputy minister, why has he approved the 3,082 chronic care beds, as well as the large number of nursing home beds, for which there will be no change in policy in terms of ward rooms?

Hon. Mr. Elston: I thought the honourable gentleman told me he was going to have a short question and he wanted a short answer. I can tell the honourable gentleman that what we are doing with respect to all our long-term care facilities is providing much better services in terms of how the ward rooms are set up, how they are constructed and the ability of people to live more comfortably in them.

The design which I think has been featured on those pre-1972 nursing homes, for instance, is one which causes problems in terms of service, not only on behalf of the staff who must provide the personal care but also on the part of the residents who live there.

In terms of our chronic care facilities, I can say without a question that we look to the announcement of new facilities for chronic care patients as providing us with up-to-date opportunities, not only for accommodation of chronic care patients but also for the rehabilitation programs which will provide them with much better care.

That having been said, I think that patients being able to be living in new facilities will allow us to provide better conditions for privacy and certainly much better conditions for long-term stay and for provision of service by the people who staff those long-term care facilities.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The minister is saying he disagrees with his assistant deputy minister. Would the minister not consider adopting the approach that is used at Bethany Lodge, a nursing home in Thunder Bay? It has only private and semi-private rooms, and the cost per day is

the same as it would be for a ward room in another facility. The private rooms are allocated on the basis of need, not on the basis of whether you can afford to live in a private room.

Hon. Mr. Elston: There are many approaches throughout the province to providing facilities for long-term care residents or patients. I can appreciate that the honourable gentleman would like us to examine all the options which are provided, not only by the not-for-profit sector but also by the profit sector. That is what is interesting when we take a look at all the care providers in the province. There are some interesting variations which provide a very high level of care. He has provided us with an example of one particular facility where the facility arrangement is such that there is more privacy.

There are other opportunities as well in terms of the design that is put in place. I was at a very interesting facility not long ago where long-term care patients in Grimsby, through the hospital there, have an interesting collection of rooms and services available which provide them with a lot of privacy.

OVERCROWDING IN SCHOOLS

Mr. Gillies: I have a question of the Minister of Education. The minister will be aware of the very serious overcrowding problem at St. John's College in Brantford. Indeed, the minister and I are meeting a delegation here at the Legislature later this afternoon.

By way of question, I want to describe briefly some of the conditions at this school. We have a school with 1,250 students in a building originally built to house about 400. We have students eating their lunch on the floor in a hallway. We have students studying on the floor in a hallway because of the completely inadequate facilities. We have 19 portables and a projection of 25 in the fall.

Will the minister reconsider his decision not to grant capital funding to this school and help meet this very urgent situation?

1520

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am quite aware of the situation at St. John's College in Brantford. That matter has been conveyed to me by my friend the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk (Mr. Nixon), by a number of others in this caucus, by others in the city of Brantford and, I might add, by my friend the member for Brantford. That is why I sometimes find it difficult to cope with some of what has been suggested here in recent days. It is very difficult for me to cope with that. I am aware of the situation.

We have said our capital allocation, while the most significant in recent memory, does not solve all the problems. I am going to look forward to a meeting this afternoon with the delegation from St. John's College. The honourable member can rest assured that this government will continue to be as sensitive as we possibly can to the many demands, new and old, extant in the capital aspect of the school community.

PETITIONS

CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM ACT

Mr. Lupusella: I wish to table a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario. The petition was collected by Sylvia Lasher and Abraham Silver, who formed the Heritage of Children organization as a result of grandparents being unable to see or visit their grandchildren.

The petition reads:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of the Attorney General hereby amend section 21 of the Children's Law Reform Act so that the word "grandparent" be included to apply for access to their grandchild. The existing law must be improved to recognize that a child has the right to his or her heritage."

Attached, Mr. Speaker, you will find a petition of 330 people who strongly believe in correcting the situation.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: Mr. Speaker, I bet you are going to guess the new total.

Mr. Speaker: I am waiting.

Mr. Warner: "To the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the government of Ontario provide the funds needed to build a 10-bed renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital to serve patients in the Scarborough area."

The petition is signed by 126 persons, bringing the new total to 1,794.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 56, An Act to control temporarily Automobile Insurance Rates in Ontario.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I wish to introduce for first reading the Automobile Insurance Act. This act provides the legislative framework to enforce the interim control of automobile insurance premiums I ordered on April 23, 1987, pending the establishment and operation of an independent rate review board.

Automobile insurance consumers are demanding fair and equitable insurance coverage at a fair and reasonable price. The government believes their demands are justified, particularly in a system where automobile insurance is compulsory. I would therefore urge speedy passage of this important bill.

Mr. Speaker: As I look around the House, I see quite a number of members involved in private conversations. It is sounding a little better now. I hope it will remain so.

GASOLINE HANDLING AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Kwinter moved first reading of Bill 57, An Act to amend the Gasoline Handling Act.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: I am pleased to reintroduce amendments of the Gasoline Handling Act and code. As members may recall from the last session, in addition to housekeeping changes, the amendments will aid in environmental protection by requiring fuel suppliers to provide my ministry with locations of private outlets with underground storage tanks, providing for the registration of all identified outlets and making it an offence under the act, after January 1, 1991, for a supplier to deliver fuel to an outlet that does not meet safety standards.

These amendments form an important part of our plan to make sure that underground gasoline tanks do not pose a threat to the environment.

SIMCOE DAY ACT

Mr. McLean moved first reading of Bill 58, An Act respecting Simcoe Day.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. McLean: The purpose of the bill is to change the name of the public holiday celebrated in many municipalities on the first Monday in August from Civic Holiday to Simcoe Day in honour of John Graves Simcoe, who was appointed first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada on September 12, 1791, and who convened the first Legislative Assembly and established the capital of the province at York, now Toronto.

LANDLORD AND TENANT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Jackson moved first reading of Bill 59, An Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Jackson: The purpose of this bill is to ensure that roomers, boarders and lodgers are protected by the Landlord and Tenant Act. However, the bill specifically excludes homes occupied by their owners where no more than four roomers, boarders or lodgers are accommodated.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I wonder if I might have the consent of the House to revert to motions. Apparently, there are some motions.

Mr. Speaker: Is that agreed?

Agreed to.

MOTIONS

COMMITTEE SITTINGS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the select committee on retail store hours be authorized to meet in the morning of Wednesday, May 20, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that the standing committee on administration of justice be authorized to meet in the morning of Thursday, May 21, 1987.

Mr. McClellan: On the question of committees, there seems to be some uncertainty about the regular schedule for committee meetings for next week. I want to indicate for the record that we are ready, willing and eager to begin our regular committee work at the beginning of next week so that the very important legislative program of this parliament can be moved forward.

I understand there is some difficulty in tabling the schedule this afternoon, but we are confident the schedule will be tabled on Tuesday so that we can begin our regular, normal committee sittings.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I appreciate the comments made by the House leader of the New Democratic Party. It is extremely helpful that he is taking that position.

I think he is aware that one of the main jobs of these standing committees is to review the estimates of expenditure. He is aware these are not normally tabled in the House until some days after the budget. Normally, these estimates would have been available next week for perusal by the committees but, unfortunately, with the

budget delayed they cannot therefore be available.

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The other thing, naturally, is that the committees deal with legislation that has had second reading in the House, and we really have not had an opportunity, although we have been here since April 28, to deal with legislation because of the decisions taken by the majority of the House to deal with a number of important, though ancillary, subjects.

I agree with the honourable member who has spoken that we want to proceed with the important legislative program and the detailed consideration of the spending estimates and we look forward to that happening in the near future.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

I understand we are discussing this motion. This is the motion that is before the House.

Mr. Andrewes: If only to add what little I might to this discussion, certainly on behalf of my caucus I would want to indicate to the government House leader and the House leader for the New Democratic Party that we stand ready, willing and able as well, but I do understand there are some discussions going on with respect to the timetable and that it was the government whip who indicated some concern about that timetable. I think perhaps it is necessary that those discussions run their course before we confirm the agenda for committees.

Mr. McClellan: I am sure the honourable government House leader would not want the erroneous impression to be created that we could start estimates on Monday or Tuesday even if the budget had been introduced, because we have not had the mandatory two weeks' notice for the estimates briefing books and we would not have had them had the budget been on May 14. Two weeks from May 14 is not May 19.

Second, we are not ready to do legislation because the government House leader has not called any legislation. It is as simple as that. To the extent that he has asked to call legislation, we have agreed to do legislation.

Mr. Speaker: Following the discussion, are all members aware of the motion before the House?

The motion simply states that the standing committee on administration of justice be authorized to meet in the morning of Thursday, May 21, 1987. That is the motion we are voting on.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BUSINESS

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved that in the order of precedence for private members' public busi-

ness, Mr. Hennessy's ballot item be considered following Mr. Lane's ballot item, that all members of the Progressive Conservative caucus be advanced by one place in their turn and that notwithstanding standing order 71(h), the requirement for notice be waived with respect to ballot item 6 and ballot item 7, both of which deal with the price of gasoline in the north.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Hon. Ms. Munro: I will complete my reaction to the throne speech on behalf of Hamilton Centre, reflecting the views of Hamilton-Wentworth also.

I would like to spend a few moments thinking about the signals advanced when we talk about enhanced trade opportunities, and the significance of that for regions such as Hamilton-Wentworth, particularly a very strong manufacturing and steel city such as Hamilton.

We agree that we must always be prepared to expand our options with regard to trade opportunities and look forward to proposals which provide a sensitive balance to tariffs, incentives and protection so desperately needed to support sensitive industries.

We also embrace the signals that allow us to go into Pacific Rim countries and to take a look at our procedures and our imagery in those countries as we look to new export markets. In addition, we will be embracing all of the initiatives that look to attracting expanded domestic markets. Indeed, our city of Hamilton is currently working closely with a Chinese mayor who has visited to try to exchange both trade and cultural opportunities, with the end result perhaps of bringing into the city of Hamilton more entrepreneurial skills and therefore also providing for more jobs. We do embrace the expanded trade vision of the throne speech and commend the government for what appears to be workable resolutions.

We in Hamilton also have our views on the need for legislation to review automobile insurance. We understand that it is a comprehensive process and therefore look forward not only to public participation, but also to the results of a comprehensive review, not the least of which is the Osborne report. We follow the views of most

people in Ontario that we are looking for a fair means of establishing rates and coverage for all.

Health care and social services are flip sides of the same coin, especially when one looks at both of those services in the context of community and public participation and responsibility. Therefore, we in Hamilton look forward to receiving the results of the social assistance review report, which is coming down fairly soon.

We also applaud the sense of community that is reflected in so many decisions and recommendations in the throne speech. For example, in the area of health care services, the capital support so needed by hospitals should be balanced by continuing education, giving fairer recommendation and credibility to needed research and development and access to that research and development by the public. We are also very pleased to see that health is continuing to be looked at not only as a preventive issue but also as part of a lifestyle.

We applaud the views of the government on bringing into being a denticare plan for children of low-income families, and we are also pleased to see that mental health facilities are being made available to children. In addition, when one looks at lifestyles, we are very cognizant of the need for more information on addictions, a better understanding of alcohol consumption and a better understanding of the rights and obligations of individual citizens in educating families.

We want to move away from a welfare mentality in many of our programs to the issue of calling those programs public service, and nowhere is this more evidenced than in the child care area.

We would like to see disincentives and labels attached to those situations over which families and individuals have no control. It seems to me that this is the essence of the thrust in the throne speech on both health care and social services.

I would also like to applaud the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) for additional moneys being made available to the city of Toronto medical facilities to investigate the particular aspects of prevention of acquired immune deficiency syndrome and dealing with AIDS patients, which are very significant areas of endeavour. Indeed, people from McMaster University have also taken a great deal of interest in the results of that study, and therefore I would like to mention the care and compassion of that university in dealing with a significant social problem and a problem that is before each one of us.

Finally, as a woman, I would like to speak to some of the women's issues that are either

mentioned directly or that are alluded to in the throne speech.

We are very much looking forward to the results of the pay equity legislation in order to allow us as women to have better access to so many opportunities. Child care is a fundamental issue for us, and we are looking forward to the results of the negotiations between the federal and provincial government. We would also like the minister to know that we applaud the establishment of a policy research institute on child youth and the family.

Many women have not been able to access training at normal stages of life, if there are any normal stages of life, and we therefore very much appreciate the opportunities for training, for moving into various levels of endeavour, for looking at different career options, whether it be entrepreneurial skills or moving into nontraditional areas of work.

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We would like to be full partners in the true sense of the word. We will therefore embrace any adult learning opportunities that move us forward in that direction.

For women, a long-term and a long-time problem has been the whole issue of family violence. Indeed, we are very pleased to see that the government, through a number of ministries, has already flowed money into a comprehensive program taking a look at wife battering and also looking at that particular problem within the context of a family.

We are also pleased to see that the government is sensitive to cultural differences and strengths and indeed applaud the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye) as he grapples with the issue of protection of domestic workers, most of whom are women.

We abhor any move by any party that would enhance and keep underlying systemic discrimination, which we have been fighting for so many years.

We abhor sex stereotyping and therefore will be working with the government to ensure that legislation is compassionate and ensures accessibility.

In conclusion, I feel that the throne speech of April 28 will have a major, positive effect on the city of Hamilton, the region and the individual people who live in that particular area. This government, of which I am so proud to be a part, has shown that it understands the needs of the people of Ontario and has shown a sensitivity to our city and region that has so long been lacking.

Along with my fellow Hamiltonians, I look forward to the future and the contributions our

city can make to this province. This government has shown that it can govern and that it can take a leadership role. I believe the throne speech will move into a budget which shows itself to be accountable yet passionate, fiscally responsible yet looking to the future with all the support that governments must give.

The Deputy Speaker: Comments and questions of the member for Hamilton Centre? There being none, debate. The member for Cochrane South.

Mr. Pope: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would have preferred the normal Speaker to be here, because he is much more charitable in his rulings; however, that is the way it goes.

The Deputy Speaker: You get what you have at any particular time.

Mr. Pope: That is right. Just luck, I guess.

I want to join in the debate on the speech from the throne and deal with a number of issues in my riding, in northern Ontario and throughout the province. A number of important issues and the intentions of this Liberal government towards the people of Cochrane South and northern Ontario have to be addressed in the context of the speech from the throne.

I want to begin, if I may, by making very clear my concern on behalf of the laid-off workers, softwood lumber workers, bush workers and mill workers in northern Ontario. I know that the government, some of its members and some of its cabinet ministers have statistics derived from another source that indicate a minimal impact. Those are employment analyses of the actual operators of the mills in Ontario. It does not reflect the layoffs of the contract workers, the contractors' employees who have borne the brunt of the impact of the softwood lumber export tax and a subsequent reduction in demand for Canadian softwood lumber in the American market.

It is very important to understand that we are not talking about an issue that does not have dramatic human overtones, dramatic impact on the workers in northern Ontario, their families and their communities.

I could talk about Hornepayne, Nakina, Terrace Bay, Thunder Bay, the communities around Sault Ste. Marie and Kapuskasing. I could talk about all sorts of small communities—and large—across this province. They are now feeling the very difficult economic impact of softwood lumber and the export tax. It is important to recognize that this is an issue governments of both levels have to address—the

federal government and the provincial government.

So far, quite frankly, the attitude of the Premier (Mr. Peterson) and the provincial government has been: "We had no part in it. It had nothing to do with the Ontario government and, therefore, we have no responsibility for it." True to their word, they have done not one iota, put not one program in place, helped not one laid-off resource worker who is suffering as a result of the export tax on softwood lumber—not one.

We have raised this issue time and time again in the Legislature. I have yet to hear from any minister of this government any specific steps he has taken to help even one laid-off resource worker. They have never indicated any such program or any such policy. They fall back on the same excuse: "We had nothing to do with this. It was Pat Carney's announcement. We did not know about it until it was made. We had no role to play in the development of this policy, and certainly we do not want to accept any responsibility."

I have just two quotations that will buttress this argument. I could quote from the words of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) in the Toronto newspapers and his words to the Ontario Lumber Manufacturers' Association when he said: "The government's position has been the same from the outset, from the very beginning of this issue in 1985, that the Ontario government opposed any negotiated settlement with the Americans on the softwood lumber dispute and it opposed any tax measures that will be brought to bear as a result of the American pressure."

The Minister of Natural Resources maintained that position religiously for over a year and still maintains it today. I refer members simply to Hansard of October 20 for the words of our Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil), who has a responsibility to us in this Legislature and to the people of Ontario in this matter.

Page 2578 of Hansard: "After the announcement had more or less come out of Washington, there was a meeting between Pat Carney and the ministers of trade from across the country. There was agreement by both the federal government and the other provinces, and as I said, Ontario reluctantly went along with that decision."

He is talking, supposedly, about a decision that was made after Pat Carney went to Washington and made the announcement on October 1 that appeared in the October 1 newspapers across this province.

Again he says, on the same page, "I am saying our original feeling on this whole matter was right; in other words, it should not have been supported."

Again, on page 2581, "We said no both to the federal government and to the other provinces, but the consensus had been made that they were going along with the offer that had been extended by Miss Carney in Washington."

In other words, our Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology takes the position that any consensus that was arrived at on the matter of softwood lumber was arrived at after Pat Carney went to Washington, after the offer of a negotiated settlement of eight to 10 per cent was made on October 1, 1986.

That is the same position the Premier of this province took in an interview written by Robert Sheppard and Kimberley Noble that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* on October 21, 1986:

"Premier David Peterson said his government had not realized Ottawa's intentions to increase lumber industry fees until 'we read about it in the newspaper,'" referring to the October 1 announcement by Pat Carney. He made those statements, which were reported on October 21, 20 days later.

The article also said, "Both Mr. Peterson and industry minister Hugh O'Neil said in the Legislature that the announcement"—i.e., Pat Carney's announcement of October 1—"was made without the prior knowledge of the Ontario government."

We have the Premier of this province and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology of this province and the Minister of Natural Resources of this province all singing from the same hymn-book, signing the same song when it came to those workers, that they had no function and no role to play, that the first they knew about a settlement, a negotiated settlement or a proposal of an 8 to 10 per cent tariff or countervail on softwood lumber was when they read it in the newspapers after Pat Carney made the announcement in Washington on October 1. They maintained that position for six months and in those six months did nothing for the laid-off workers in those communities, absolutely nothing. They cannot point to a single program.

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I want to set the record straight, because this has been a concerted campaign of deception. It is the lumber workers of this province who have been suffering because of this campaign of deception. The Liberals are doing nothing as a government, because they claim they are not

responsible for it. They claim they are not responsible for it because they did not know about it and the first they heard about it was when Pat Carney publicly announced it in Washington. After that, they went along with the consensus, albeit reluctantly.

Here is the text of the letter from Mary Mogford, who the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology indicated was the negotiator on behalf of Ontario in the softwood lumber matter. That is what he said in the estimates of his own ministry in February of this year, that Mary Mogford and one of his officials were the negotiators for the Ontario Liberal government on the softwood lumber issue with both the federal government and the American authorities. Here is what Mary Mogford wrote:

"To Mr. G. E. Shannon, Deputy Minister for International Trade, Department of External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson Building, Ottawa, Ontario.

"Dear Mr. Shannon:

"In the interests of maintaining a national position on the softwood lumber issue, Ontario is prepared to raise revenues, largely from the softwood lumber industry, by \$30 million per annum. This sum is the equivalent of a significant increase in stumpage fees for the softwood lumber industry and might well be partly raised through other revenue-generating mechanisms.

"We anticipate that we could schedule 50 per cent of the revenue increases to Ontario to begin January 1, 1987, and a second 50 per cent increase by July 1, 1987.

"More detail on the precise methods of implementation will be provided as soon as possible.

"Sincerely, Mary Mogford, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources."

The date of that letter is September 26, 1986, five days before Pat Carney's announcement in Washington and 25 days before the Premier told the *Globe and Mail* that Ontario had played no role, that the first Ontario had known about this was when it was announced in Washington by Pat Carney.

Clearly, on the record, this government has engaged in a campaign of deception over its involvement in the softwood lumber issue. It is engaged in a campaign of shirking its responsibilities for the unemployed lumber workers and mill workers in northern Ontario, who are suffering by a decision of which we now know the government was the co-author.

In September 1986, the Ontario officials negotiated a deal that not only included the

authorization of Pat Carney to negotiate a settlement with the American authorities and contained a deal that Ontario would contribute to the costs of that arrangement, but also set the Ontario contribution at \$30 million—a figure, by the way, that the Premier used the day after the throne speech as being the size of the heritage fund, thereby confirming the number contained in this letter. They proposed increasing revenues that the forest products industry would pay, at least in part, to make up the \$30 million.

The Premier, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology and the Minister of Natural Resources denied all of this in this letter for six months. I think the workers of this province, particularly the bush workers and the mill workers, deserve an honest government that will confess to what it has done, meet its responsibilities and help out those workers. They have received no help whatsoever from this government; none.

I have asked for six months in this House, going right back to October 16, what this government was going to do, what projects it was going to introduce, to help those laid-off workers. I have never had an answer and I have asked it at least 25 times.

The reaction now of the Premier is: “Ha, ha. You did not catch us soon enough. You are flogging a dead horse.” The reaction of the Minister of Natural Resources in his interjection is: “Ha, ha. You did not catch us in this campaign of deception soon enough. That is old news.” The laid-off lumber workers of this province are not old news.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Cochrane South has been dancing along the line. He was on the right side of the line until that point. Up to that point, he had talked about the government having a campaign of deception, etc. At that point, he came into the area of identifying particular ministers or people and, therefore, he should get back on the right side of the line and not identify people with adjectives that are not in order.

Mr. Pope: The lumber workers of northern Ontario do not appreciate these fine distinctions. They know they are out of work because of what this government did. They know this government would not tell the public or them its implication and role in this matter. They know this government, subsequent to its involvement in this matter, shirked its responsibility and refused to help them. That is what they know. They know how compassionate a Liberal government is; it walked away from its responsibilities.

Mr. Breaugh: I have never heard a more eloquent withdrawal in my life.

Mr. Pope: He never asked for one and I do not intend to give one, anyway.

We have the same attitude with respect to other ministers in this government on the trade issue. Three and a half to four weeks ago, we had the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) reported in the London Free Press as having no idea of what agricultural matters were being discussed in the free trade talks, as having been uninformed but having a generalized concern over the potential impact of the trade negotiations on the farm and agricultural communities of this province.

Today, we have a statement from him that confirms what we knew all along: he has been involved in negotiations, along with his officials, with the federal government on the matter of the trade negotiations with the United States. That is a concerted campaign to shirk his responsibilities to fight for Ontario on trade negotiation matters, trying to pretend he is not involved when we know full well that his officials are meeting at least once a month with the federal trade officials to review the matters that are the content of the trade discussions between the US and Canada.

The Liberal Party, as the government of this province, has an obligation to fight for the people of Ontario, not to find excuses not to do anything, not to try to claim it is not involved in a matter when we all know it is. The government has an obligation to fight openly and publicly for Ontario's unique interests. It has shirked it so far; it tries to hide from its responsibilities when the impact is felt.

We need a better voice on trade matters than we are getting from this government, and that is for sure. There are too many jobs in too many sectors of this province that are at stake. We have had nothing from this government but a song and dance over the last six months as it tries to politically posture itself at the expense of the workers who are going to suffer unless we have a strong, forceful presence at the table.

The government should not bother walking away from the federal government or politically distancing itself. Never mind the rainbow tours to Washington hoping to get good press coverage. It should just do the hard work to represent Ontario workers and Ontario interests in the trade discussions. It has not done it so far and it is time it started.

I have a number of other comments I would like to make on the speech from the throne and its initiatives, such as they are, for northern Ontario.

I want to put the matter somewhat into context by indicating that, once again, this government has announced a so-called commitment to northern Ontario. I want to take members back to the estimates of 1986-87 because in those estimates I think we find out a bit about what the Liberal commitment to northern Ontario really is.

Members recall that last year in the speech from the throne there was an announcement of a northern development fund to the tune of \$17 million. True to their word, the Liberals put an item in the budget of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines in the amount of \$17 million for a northern development fund.

But what else did they do? They took almost \$7 million—\$6,913,100—out of the economic development package. They reduced it by almost \$7 million, I presume to assign \$7 million of the \$17 million into the northern development fund. Now we only have an additional commitment of \$10 million, not \$17 million, because in reality they reduced the economic development fund by \$7 million and increased the northern development fund by \$7 million.

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What else did they do? We turn to the next page and, lo and behold, we have a reduction in the northern transportation allocation of—guess what?—\$10 million. They took \$10 million out of northern transportation and \$7 million out of economic development, all in the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, and put it into a northern development fund. The net effect was they did not add a single blessed dollar to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines for economic development in northern Ontario, not a dollar. It was all a charade, a public relations exercise, and no new money flowed into northern Ontario as a result of that initiative.

That is the context, and it is right in the estimates of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. There is no secret about it. It is right in there, pages E-138 to E-140: an announced new program, but no money.

Now we have further initiatives announced in the speech from the throne, and I think it is important to have a look at them because if they are analysed in detail, they indicate rather clearly the position of this government towards northern Ontario.

I am referring to page 23 of the speech from the throne, which says, "We will continue to pay special attention to meeting the health care needs of northern Ontarians. In particular, we will address ways of alleviating chronic shortages of health manpower."

The first response, "A northern regional office will be established." We do not need another set of bureaucrats in northern Ontario administering health care. We need dollars for services on the ground, not a new regional office.

Second, "The program to provide physiotherapists in underserved areas will be expanded to include other rehabilitation therapists." Good move, and it is time it was done because the need is there, but that is all the government has announced in terms of initiatives.

The third is even more laughable. So far, the government has a northern regional office with bureaucrats in it and it has an expansion of physiotherapists in the underserved areas to include rehabilitation therapists. The third is, "A feasibility study will be undertaken to determine ways of linking health science centres in southern Ontario with educational centres and health facilities in the north." That sounds good.

So now the government has a northern regional office, rehabilitation therapists added to physiotherapists and a feasibility study. Those are the government's initiatives on northern health care for this coming year. Let us look at them. Let us look at this "feasibility study...to determine ways of linking health science centres in southern Ontario with educational centres and health facilities in the north."

That, my friends, is a withdrawal of a commitment to the associated hospital program that was announced in the speech from the throne in 1985. It was a program I had the privilege of negotiating, first with the University of Western Ontario and then with other hospitals in northern Ontario. It was announced in the throne speech. The associated hospital program is in that speech from the throne we issued in 1985. I was involved in the negotiations with the University of Western Ontario. It was a *fait accompli*. The arrangements were made. This government cancelled it.

It cancelled the arrangements between the Timmins District Hospital, the Timmins Hospital Centre and the University of Western Ontario. It refused to honour Dr. Frank Covington's contract. This government refused to do it. He was responsible for community mental health services and psychiatric services in the Cochrane district. He had been moved from Thunder Bay, where he and an associate had done a tremendous job of establishing community mental health services across northwestern Ontario in association with the Thunder Bay hospitals. We moved him into northeastern Ontario because we needed his experience.

This government cancelled his contract, refused to honour it. He has now left the country. The Liberal Party of Ontario refused to continue with the associated hospital program that would link southern Ontario training centres and university hospitals to hospitals in northern Ontario. Now, two years later, it has the gall to say it is going to do a feasibility study on the very thing it cancelled. That is its commitment to improved health care in northern Ontario. It did not do only that. I could go through all sorts of things.

First, we had the innuendo from the Minister of Health over a period of a year that the Timmins District Hospital was never fixed for funding. I have a document here that is part of documents that were developed in 1985, and the normal hospital scheduling program is a multi-year program.

It clearly shows that the Minister of Health in March 1981 gave permission to develop a master program; that the Minister of Health on October 3, 1984, gave permission to develop the new hospital on the Ross Avenue site; that on February 24, 1983, the approval of the role study was given, and that on November 21, 1983, the approval of the master program was given.

It also shows that the total cost of the project was \$55 million; that the Ministry of Health's share was \$36 million; that the operating cost implication was \$1.75 million a year; that it was currently at the functional program stage; that the anticipated tender construction date was October 1987; and that the capital cash flow for this project in 1985-86 was \$0.3 million, in 1986-87 was \$0.5 million, in 1987-88 was \$6 million, in 1988-89 was \$17 million, in 1989-90 was \$12 million and in 1990-91 was \$0.2 million.

It was all scheduled for dispersal over a period of five years, in the normal course, along with every other hospital construction program in this province. Yet the Minister of Health has engaged in rhetoric up north and in the Timmins area and has tried to indicate that this hospital was never approved and was never funded. That is simply and categorically not true. In 1985, it was set into the regular budget process and the regular capital process of the Ministry of Health. Clearly, if the minister would release the documents to the people of Timmins, they would show exactly that fact.

What is the Liberal commitment to health care in northern Ontario, particularly in Timmins? Before I was elected, we had an unfortunate closure of a psychiatric hospital in 1976 in Timmins. The closest psychiatric facility for acute care, other than the 24-bed unit that is an

adjunct to St. Mary's General Hospital, was in North Bay, which is 220 miles away.

Because of that wrong decision in 1976, I made a decision that I was entitled to make, with the approval of the policy and priorities board of cabinet, to establish 60 psychiatric beds for the new Timmins District Hospital. Because they were replacing 100 per cent funded beds that were closed down in 1976, I made a decision, supported by the policy and priorities board of cabinet, that they would be fully funded in terms of capital.

The Minister of Health removed the 100 per cent funding commitment that I made. He cancelled it unilaterally, without authority, because he did not agree with my decision, and then he reduced the number of psychiatric beds from 60 to 43. That is the commitment that we see from the Liberals to health care.

I say to my friends that the air ambulance service is another good example. With great fanfare, the Liberal government announced the patient transportation system and the northern Ontario travel grant, and the Minister of Health religiously denied over a period of a year and a half that the Conservatives ever had a program in place.

It was only when we got him in estimates that his officials were forced to tell him not only that we had a program in place, approved by the cabinet of the day, but also that money had actually been allocated to the Ministry of Northern Affairs to operate the air transportation system and that the amount was \$1.5 million for the first part of the first year of the patient transportation system.

Again this is a denial of the past commitments and a withdrawal of services, because the new program was only announced as taking effect on December 1, 1985, and for six months the people of northern Ontario were denied that program because of the political agenda of the Minister of Health.

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When it comes to the commitment to health care in northern Ontario, I have to say to my good friend the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini)—whose riding is providing the wine for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the city of Timmins, and he is more than welcome to come up and join us there—I am sorry, it will take more than a northern regional office, a program to expand physiotherapists with other rehabilitation therapists and a feasibility study to give the emphasis on improving health care that we need in the north.

The next reference to northern Ontario comes in the form of a world-class—and we all know the definition of that now; it has to do with cross-fertilization, according to the Premier—tourist destination program. The throne speech says, “More funds will be provided to the Destinations North and East program.” It talks about a heritage inns program. I would like to know how many heritage inns have been designated by the Minister of Tourism and Recreation (Mr. Eakins) in the district of Cochrane. How many? Zero. This program initiative does not include any support for northern Ontario. The heritage inns program is of assistance to some of the Liberal members in the cabinet; it is of no assistance to northern Ontario.

“Increased funding will be provided to improve provincial parks.” What provincial parks? The Minister of Natural Resources has refused to bring into existence 51 provincial parks, which he was committed to doing when he took office. That was one of his very first commitments. If anything, he is weaseling on that commitment. He is not bringing in the orders in council.

We created 100 new parks in 12 months in 1984; the other 51 parks were prepared for order in council. This minister has done nothing to bring those forward and, in fact, he is denying traditional uses in those parks now under his review of the parks guidelines. Traditional users of these lands situated in northern Ontario are going to be denied access to them for their livelihood. They are going to be taken out of mining activity.

I warned those fellows who thought that by separating the mining branch into a separate ministry there would be no impact, one of the first things that would happen would be that mining would not be allowed in provincial parks, even on a permit-of-exploration basis and—guess what?—it has come to pass exactly as I knew it would. The government is denying access by prospectors and developers in the mining industry to some of the areas of greatest mineral potential in northern Ontario and it is doing it because the minister is doing a review of the book.

I say to the minister, get on with the job of creating these parks in northern Ontario, get on with the job of allowing the economic development of mining lands and tourist facilities in these areas, stop delaying development in northern Ontario, stop acting to the prejudice of northern Ontario industries and northern Ontario workers, allow the development to take place.

What is the government's next reference to northern Ontario? A renewal of the apprenticeship system. In that area of the province, layoffs have increased by 250 per cent in 1986 over 1985 because of the inaction of the Liberal government. Their inaction has led to these layoffs. We have raised it in the Legislature for a year and a half, without response from this government. Their inaction has led to a 250 per cent increase in layoffs in northwestern Ontario, and they are going to offer them apprenticeship programs. Where are they going to work after they finish their apprenticeship training in an area with a massive 250 per cent increase in layoffs in basic resource industries? Where are they going to find work? There are no answers from this government.

It is passing strange to note that this government, which claims it is committed to job creation and development, has formulated no response to the people of northern Ontario other than telling them to find their own answers.

That is what the Premier told Geraldton council in the summer of 1986: “Find your own answers. You will have to come up with your own solutions because I do not have them.” He has an obligation, as the government of all of the people of all of the province, to darn well work hard to come up with the answers, to help and not tell people they are on their own.

That is precisely the message he gave in Sault Ste. Marie at this economic development conference he himself, as Premier, hosted, a conference where the public relations costs were greater than the benefits for northern Ontario. Public relations firms from Toronto were hired and invitations were sent out at the last minute by Purolator Courier from a Toronto address. Northerners had very little opportunity either to run the conference or to participate in the benefits of the conference. It was all run out of Toronto.

What was the conclusion of the conference? Guess what? The Premier said: “You are on your own. You will have to come up with your own solutions. We cannot help you. I do not have any answers.”

He said the same thing in Sudbury two years before that with respect to the Inco and Falconbridge workers: “I do not have any answers for the nickel problems. You are on your own.”

A Premier is supposed to be the Premier of all the province. He is supposed to work hard for answers to help workers in every region of the province. This Premier has done so little. If he thinks going on an imperial tour of northern Ontario and having people come in and pay \$200

each to share wine and cheese with him is going to solve the problems of the north and win him support, he has got another think coming.

The imperial tours are over and the media blitzes are over. It has come down to time for action. There is more to governing this province than losing 20 pounds, substituting contact lenses for glasses and buying a red tie. There is more to governing this province than sitting back and enjoying the good times generally.

One has to work hard to help the areas of the province that are in difficulty. This government has not worked hard for the north and the Premier has not worked hard to help the north. That will all come forth in the next campaign. Do not worry, it will.

The clearest example of the Premier's commitment to job creation in northern Ontario comes in his own estimates on February 10, 1987. I am referring to page R-535. The question I posed is this: "How many dollars have you as Minister of Northern Development and Mines put into northern Ontario in the last year to help unemployed resource workers?"

In 1982 and 1983, under sections 38 and 39 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, by federal-provincial arrangement between myself and Lloyd Axworthy, over 7,000 laid-off resource workers were employed in northern Ontario under section 38.

The Premier's answer, in Hansard, was that he had committed \$350,000 and had employed between 20 and 25 laid-off workers in northern Ontario in the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

Actions speak louder than words and the Liberals will soon learn that. They have shown no commitment whatsoever to an area of the province devastated by layoffs right now.

Interjection.

Mr. Pope: No? Seven thousand workers employed in 1982-83 who were temporarily laid off because of the economic downturn, 7,000 families who were helped, 7,000 workers who could earn up to \$10 an hour doing essential resource work across the province, 7,000 workers in communities from one end of the province to the other who were helped in this program. His government helped 20 to 25 at a time when the layoffs were even greater.

They are proud to speak in favour of that? They are proud to interrupt and give their comments in favour of that? They should be ashamed. They should be ashamed of their track record. They should be ashamed of the fact they have turned their back on the north and those

resource industries and those workers. They should be ashamed of the economic and social impact their neglect has had on workers, their families and their communities across northern Ontario. They should be ashamed of it, because really, it is criminal what has been going on.

1620

Lots of talk, lots of show, a lot of show-biz glitz, but no action to help the people of northern Ontario, other than the back of the hand and the Premier saying: "You are on your own, fellows. Have a good time, because I intend to have a good time in Toronto."

That is exactly the Premier's attitude, and it will come back, it will be discussed in the coming months. I look forward to that opportunity to compare the BILD program and its positive impacts on northern Ontario between 1981 and 1985, to compare the employment growth in northern Ontario between 1981 and 1985, with what those birds have done since they got into office. I look forward to that comparison.

The Liberals think the BILD program was so bad they have virtually tried to imitate some of it; very little of it, but some of it. I have a good example for them. One of the initiatives they announced was a reference to peat. They want to develop the peat resource in northern Ontario. That sounds good. The media in Toronto think it is a brave new initiative; it is innovative.

I have to tell them that in 1981 the entire peat resources of this province were mapped and made available under licence of exploration, and some licences of exploration were developed. This is not a new program. This is a six-year-old program they have announced. It has already been completed. All they have to do—and it is even in red—is to change the date on it and reissue it, because that is all they have announced, something that was done in 1981. That is their peat initiative. That is all it is.

The Liberals have also talked about the aerospace industry and its relationship to the resource sector. My friends, in 1982 we started mapping the natural resources of this province using satellite imagery. That is what they announced as a new initiative; something that had been going on since 1982.

The forest resources of this province were being mapped both in terms of harvest and in terms of reforestation, starting in 1982, using satellite imagery that had been released by the United States Army for use for civilian purposes. I gave a lecture in 1983 at the University of Toronto to the forestry faculty on that subject, and we had maps up there to show all the forestry

students and the staff the advances that had been made in the linkage of the aerospace industry with the forest resources sector. Boy, some new initiative those fellows announced for northern Ontario; something that started in 1982.

Northern development councils were established a year and a half ago and for the first year were given no information, no mandate and no guidelines by this government. They could not get answers out of this government. They could not get directions on what to do. They were totally frustrated, and these were the government's own appointees who were desperately seeking direction. Yes, they were a wide group of individuals. Many people from many different walks of life, of many political persuasions in northern Ontario, were appointed to these councils, but they languished for a year, and finally the Premier came up with a hot idea, "Let us give them authority over the northern heritage fund."

Then the Premier made another startling disclosure. It appeared in the Timmins Daily Press on April 29, 1987. He said, "The seed money for the fund"—referring to the Ontario heritage fund—"will be the province's share of the federal tax on softwood lumber exports to the United States and is to be administered in collaboration with the nine northern development councils already established."

Now it is not only that the Liberals are going to accept their advice, they are going to consult with them, but also the northern Ontario heritage fund would be funded with the \$30 million from the export tax on softwood lumber. That seemed like an innovative idea, except that the Premier had already announced on January 8, 1987, that money would be used to retrain the lumber workers who were laid off because of the softwood lumber export tax. So now he is doing what we call double-dipping: he is using the same amount of money for two different programs that he announces at two different times and hopes that he is going to get away with it.

It will not work. We and the people of northern Ontario know that \$30 million a year is less than the transfer payments for the public institutions in the city of Timmins alone. It is less than the budget of the Northern Ontario Development Corp. It is less than what is going on with the northern Ontario regional development program and NODC right now. It is a meagre contribution to an area that is experiencing substantial economic difficulties.

I say to my friends that a greater commitment has to be made to northern Ontario. I say to the

people of the rest of the province, if they will not help the laid-off lumber workers, if they will not help the iron ore miners, if they will not help the steel workers at Algoma Steel in Sault Ste. Marie, are they going to help you if your turn comes? Is this government going to stand up for you? Is it going to retrain you? Is it going to find you new jobs? Is it going to give you economic security if the layoffs ever hit you? Based on their past performance, certainly not.

Based on the Liberals' past performance, certainly there is no way you can count on this government. It came true with Goodyear, right here in Toronto. It is coming true in the petrochemical industry in Lambton and Sarnia, where there has been a 20 per cent layoff, from 10,000 down to 8,000, in the last year and a half.

The member for Sarnia (Mr. Brandt), the member for Essex North (Mr. Hayes) and the member for Lambton (Mr. D. W. Smith)—oh no, not the member for Lambton; I am sorry—the member for Sarnia and the member for Essex North have expressed concerns to the government in this House about the petrochemical industry and the 20 per cent layoffs in the last year and a half. The Liberal member for Lambton has never raised it once. A 20 per cent layoff in the most important industry in that part of the province and the Liberal member for Lambton has never raised it.

In response to the questions by the member for Essex North and the member for Sarnia, we got nothing from this government, other than sending the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) down to try to slam them in the face while they are down.

I say again to the workers of this province, if they are not going to help you in Sarnia and Lambton, if they are not going to help you at Goodyear here in Toronto, if they are not going to help you in the steel mills, the iron ore mines, the nickel mines and the sawmills of this province, are they going to help you when your time comes? The answer is they will not. They never have before. They never will. So you can look forward to no help.

The Premier will stand back and be relaxed, maintain his image and be relaxed, with a smirk on his face, and tell you, "You are on your own, but by the way, vote for me." The people of this province deserve better government than that. They deserve a better commitment to the economy and job creation than they are getting from this current government.

Yes, there have been many projects undertaken in the riding of Cochrane South, initiatives

started by the previous government. I can point to the EldCap program initiated in 1985, which has led to the construction of the Anson General Hospital, which is now ongoing; the construction of Bingham Memorial Hospital in Matheson, which is now ongoing; the furtherance of phase 2 of the Golden Manor home for the aged, and the construction of South Centennial Manor in Iroquois Falls, which is almost done.

We have also the commitment of this government—previously fixed, so it could not be reversed—to the four-laning of Highway 101 from Pamour right through to the heart of Timmins. We have the commitment to improvement of other road facilities in our area. We have the announcement of a workers' adviser office, which I will talk about in a minute, with the Workers' Compensation Board coming into the city of Timmins.

We have work being done on the Twin Falls road. We have work being done on the park on Lake Abitibi. We have work being done on the development of the infrastructure in Black River and Matheson and specifically Holtyre and Ramore. We have work being done with respect to the infrastructure, the water supply, to South Porcupine from the city of Timmins central, so it can have access to proper water supplies. All that work is going on, and it is a sign of progress.

1630

One of the current issues that is most worrisome to the people of the city of Timmins and in the gold mining industry generally is the matter of lung cancer among gold miners and the rights of the widows and their dependents to proper compensation.

The worker adviser office must be located in Timmins immediately, even if it does not open its office until the end of the summer, as the Minister of Labour stated. The worker advisers must be in Timmins immediately to help those widows and those dependants with the processing of their claims; to give some help to myself as a member of the provincial parliament and to Moe Sheppard of the Steelworkers union to help those claims through the appeal process with applications for reconsideration and notices of appeal.

Some widows and their families will benefit even from the stringent guidelines, and I think it is mandatory that those who will benefit be processed immediately, without delay.

Jean Larcher of the victims of the mining environment group and Moe Sheppard of the Steelworkers union and our staff at our office are working hard to try to accumulate the informa-

tion so that these widows and their families can get what they justly deserve: full compensation benefits where their spouses have died from lung cancer.

We need more than that. We need more than a worker adviser. We need, and in fact I think we have the right to demand, an independent medical expert in lung diseases to come to Timmins, to stay in Timmins, to process the medical information and evidence, preparing it for applications for reconsideration, preparing those appeals and helping us to counterbalance the nonsense we have had for so long from the medical advisers of the Workers' Compensation Board. We have the right to have that kind of assistance from the Workers' Compensation Board, and we demand that it happen now.

We demand that these claims be processed, as they should be. Once we get through those who can qualify under the existing criteria, we then intend to challenge the criteria with everything we have at our disposal, including legal challenges in the Supreme Court of Ontario, because we are not satisfied with the way the Muller study was handled. We are not satisfied with the Ham committee report. We are not satisfied with the criteria that have been gazetted this week in the Ontario Gazette. We intend to use them for the people who can benefit, but from then on, we will do whatever we can to change those guidelines so that people who have suffered from lung cancer, who have died from lung cancer, and their widows and dependants will get the compensation they deserve.

Everyone from all political persuasions in Timmins is united in this effort. It is time it happened. There has been a six-year delay since I first raised this matter in the Legislature in 1979, and the response to my raising it initially was the Muller report, within two weeks of the questions being raised. Those questions were based on the existence of a federal study called the Wigle study, which showed a higher than normal linkage of incidence of lung cancer to the communities of Kirkland Lake, Timmins and Kapuskasing.

That led to Robert Elgie, as the then Minister of Labour, announcing the Muller report. We were told the Muller report would be ready by 1983. What we got was a first-phase report that statistically linked lung cancer to gold miners in the city of Timmins. Then it went on to a second phase of the report, where it tried to determine the cause of the higher than normal lung cancer incidence among gold miners in Timmins. It threw out smoking—that had no impact one way

or the other—and laid it directly on dust conditions in the mines. The finding of that direct linkage should have ended the argument, never mind the exposure times. Clearly, exposure to silica dust in the gold mines enhanced the incidence of lung cancer and was a direct cause of that increased incidence; therefore, anyone who died or suffered from lung cancer should be automatically qualified without exposure time frames or limits.

That is the position I maintained in front of the Ham committee when I met with it. That is the position I maintained in this House. That is the position I maintained in estimates with the Minister of Labour a year ago and a year and a half ago.

We think it is time the government sorted through the nonsense that is going on in the Workers' Compensation Board, made a policy decision, even if it wants to do it outside the Workers' Compensation Board system, and said from now on: "If your spouse died from lung cancer and he was a gold miner, you as a widow are going to qualify for a provincial pension, and you deserve it. We will argue about retroactivity later, but you are going to qualify immediately and you are going to get full pension benefits. We will set up a separate fund, if you want, outside of the compensation system so that it cannot be appealed by the mining industry, and we are going to make sure those payments are made. We will fight out the arguments later on."

Mr. G. I. Miller: What about the farmer who gets cancer and dies the same way?

Mr. Pope: It has been proven statistically and by medical evidence that miners who worked in the gold mines and who have lung cancer are suffering from lung cancer because of their work, and the Liberal member for Haldimand-Norfolk (Mr. G. I. Miller) does not want them to get the pension benefits they are entitled to. I might say that is a typical Liberal attitude.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: You are twisting things a touch, just a touch.

Mr. Pope: Mr. Speaker, I know you want me to continue at some length.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. This is not the recess. Member for Cochrane South, if you are going to carry on, please carry on.

Mr. Pope: I was just allowing for the reaction to set in; that is all.

It is very clear that in terms of northern Ontario and the entire province, this government has no policy on trade matters. It has no presence in

Washington. They thought he was Premier Anderson in 1985. Now they just wish he would go away. His rainbow tour was as catastrophic as another rainbow tour by a certain Argentinian vice-president many, many years ago in Europe; it was just as much of a failure as a rainbow tour as that was.

He has no credibility in Ottawa. He failed to carry the day in Vancouver, and the first ministers were talking about the Premier who failed in Washington, who failed in Ottawa and who failed in Quebec City. Why did he fail? He failed because he had no credibility. Why has he no credibility? Because every leader of every provincial government in this country and the Prime Minister knew that on his first test, softwood lumber, he was saying something different to the people of the province from what he was saying to them. He was making a secret deal in writing with the federal government to impose an export tax on softwood lumber with all the impact on northern Ontario workers and telling the people of this province he did not know anything about it. That is why he has no credibility. That is why he is going to fail in representing Ontario's interests in trade.

This government has no policy with respect to economic development of this province except to sit back and enjoy the good times. He will get his picture taken often and enjoy the good times; he will ignore the regions of the province that have specific needs, as my colleagues have indicated. They have indicated specific needs in Durham, downtown Toronto, Cambridge, Burlington and in west Toronto for housing, for transportation, for an industrial strategy. This government has none of that. But boy, can it throw a good press reception—lots of red ties, lots of smiles, everyone sitting back enjoying himself.

1640

The workers of Goodyear and the people in Ottawa who object to a planning decision can sit and wait, because their Premier is going to go for a skate on the Rideau Canal, a photo opportunity, rather than meet with them. Their Premier is going to have a wine and cheese party in Thunder Bay or Sault Ste. Marie rather than meet with the union representatives and the political representatives of the laid-off steelworkers at Algoma Steel. This Premier is going to meet in secret with the members of the Geraldton council and tell them they are on their own, but he will not go out to meet with the unemployed bush workers who have been laid off because of his negligence in the handling of softwood lumber.

All is right. The style is all there: "It is a great world, just sit back and enjoy it. I do not want to hear about all the problems." That is not the responsibility of this government.

Mr. Shymko: Cosmetic politics.

Mr. Pope: Cosmetic politics at its worst.

At least we had the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) pre-announce the budget today. The disabled of this province are going to get at least a \$150-a-month increase in the upcoming budget, an increase that should have been passed on last January 1 but was not. It was not passed on, but it is going to be passed on, on the eve of an election, in the budget. They are going to pass on those increases—a policy dictated by the imminent calling of an election and not by the needs of those people. Will it be retroactive? Will it be more than \$150 a month? Will the government give back the benefits it withheld from disabled people?

What about the drug benefit cards that people have lost because of the failure to pass through and, therefore, the disqualification? Dozens of them have called my office and many other constituency offices across this province, dozens upon dozens, literally hundreds of people who have lost their right to a drug benefit card because of this decision that was made and stuck to for five long months when the governments of Alberta and British Columbia passed it through.

Mr. Shymko: What is five months to the Liberals?

Mr. Pope: What is five months to the disabled people of this province? It meant an awful lot to those of us who had to go to our constituency offices and listen to the problems that decision created.

This speech from the throne is the same cosmetic canvassing of touchpoints in the hope that the government will attract widespread public support. It is the same cosmetic attempt to try to claim they are solving all problems when in reality they are not addressing them, when in reality they are not doing anything more than shuffling money around and putting money into areas that already exist.

There are no new initiatives here. The government has just announced it is going to carry on like it is supposed to. Congratulations. The Liberals are going to carry on like they are supposed to be doing in their government. They are actually going to build highways. Goodness, what a brave new initiative.

Mr. Shymko: Cross-fertilization, they call it.

Mr. Pope: Cross-fertilization—developing a world-class speech from the throne. It fits the definition, this speech from the throne. A world-class effort—lots of cross-fertilization.

This province and the workers and the people who need the government deserve better than they have been given. For that reason, I and my colleagues cannot support this speech from the throne. We will take our own initiatives, our own responses, our own ideas and our own policies to the people of this province in the coming weeks and months, and the people will judge which party in this Legislature really understands the problems, is predicting future responsibilities we may have and is putting in place new ideas and innovative approaches to try to help the people of the province.

The day of the red tie, the silly grin and the laid-back attitude is over. People need and expect some action from this government. I have been from one end of the province to the other; with the Liberal government of Ontario, they are not getting it.

Mr. Mancini: There are a lot of things a person could say about the speech that was just given by my colleague across the way. One thing I have found over the last few months as I have watched the Conservative members of the Legislature—actually, they appear to be like a rowboat in the ocean, just drifting and bobbing up and down. That was probably one of the most negative speeches I have ever heard given in the Legislature.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order, especially from members who might not be sitting in their seats.

Mr. Mancini: All members will know, and I am sure they realize, that our colleague who just finished speaking, during his term as the Minister of Natural Resources, received tremendous, positive support from myself on a number of activities which affected his former ministry and my constituency. To sit here now and look across the floor at the former minister and see how negative he has become, really, I do not think that sits well, even with himself.

If I could offer some advice to my good friend, a person I deeply respect, a person I hope to visit and go fishing with in the near future, or at least play golf or something, I would suggest he should be a little bit more positive and then his thoughts and considerations would be taken more seriously.

The Deputy Speaker: Questions and comments? There being none, reply.

Mr. Mancini: Do you mean he gets to reply?

Mr. Pope: Of course.

Mr. Mancini: If I had known that, I would not have said anything.

Mr. Pope: To my friend the member for Essex South, the invitation still stands and he is more than welcome. I remind all members that this is a great year to come to the riding of Cochrane South. We have three 75th anniversaries going on. Industries from across this province, including a very significant industry in Essex South, are contributing to the celebrations that are going on in the city of Timmins, and I think the publicity for that particular industry has been beneficial for the industry in his riding.

I accept my friend's comments. I guess my only response is that if you are a laid-off lumber worker who has had no work for six months—and I have met with these people and visited them in their communities; I have occasion to do so when I am visiting the in-laws—if you have no recourse in these small communities to any other option except leaving the community and virtually abandoning your home, your life and your friends, if you have no option because of the softwood lumber tax, if you have no option because of the economic downturn in the forest products industry, I think that is a pretty sad situation and someone has to speak for them.

This government systematically over six months denied its responsibility. I can play games about who is saying what and who said what as well as anyone else in the Legislature. The fact of the matter is that the impact of all this is devastating for those workers in Ontario. Timmins has one of the smallest unemployment rates in the province. We are doing very well economically. There is no doubt about it. Everyone will tell you that. It is these workers who desperately need the help that we have to look to, and this government has not done it.

Mr. Charlton: I am not sure it is a pleasure to rise and join in the debate on this throne speech. It was fairly easy to summarize the throne speech by the Premier and his government, and I would like to have a crack at coining a new phrase that sort of flows out of an old quotation we all know very well: Never in the history of mankind has one person said so much for so long, and in doing so, said absolutely nothing. I think that fairly accurately summarizes the impact this throne speech has had on Ontario.

1650

It is 10 years now since I first arrived here. This is the 11th throne speech I have sat through.

I honestly have to say that of the 11 throne speeches I have sat through, this is the only one about which I have not received a single call, either pro or con. I continue to receive calls on the issues of concern out there in this province, whether it be unemployment, youth unemployment, plant closings, layoffs, day care, education, housing or health care. I continue to receive calls on the issues outstanding in the province, but I received not a single call commenting on the content of this throne speech.

I defy any member of the government to latch on to one of the people in the press gallery and go out on to the streets of this city, probably the one city in the province that should be most aware of what the government said in the throne speech because of the three major newspapers and all the television networks here that focus on Queen's Park, and interview people on the street as to whether they thought there were useful comments in the throne speech about a future direction for Ontario, and what those comments were. Unless, of course, they happened to interview their colleagues from across the way on the back benches, the response would be in every single case: "I am sorry. I do not know. I cannot recall anything specific that was suggested." That is precisely because nothing was specifically suggested in the throne speech of two weeks ago.

I have listened not to all of the speeches that have gone on over the past week and a half, but to quite a number of them. I think the last speech we just listened to was a reasonably good example of the long list of very specific things in the province with which the government has failed to come to terms.

To take that comment a step further, it is fair to say that this government has had extreme difficulty making a decision about what to do about virtually anything and everything raised in this House in the past two years. As a matter of fact, I think it becomes quite clear that the only issues—even this is not absolutely true—on which they have been able to make any kind of constructive and useful decisions are those issues that formed part of, not all of, the accord we signed with the Liberal Party on June 25, 1985.

Unfortunately, they even had difficulty with somewhere between a third and a half of the issues in that accord, issues they presumably thought through. They made them campaign issues. They were issues they had to think through a second time in the process of negotiation with us. To this day, they still have not been able to make a decision. I will run

through just a few of them very quickly. They have been touched on by others.

In the campaign, we were promised legislation on justification of plant closings and layoffs and extension of severance pay. We were promised that again in the accord. The Minister of Labour stands up here day after day, week after week, month after month, saying: "We are working on it. It is coming." What is it the government has been doing for the past two years? What is it the government did for the 42 years prior to June 1985? Did it not do any thinking? Did it not do any planning? Did it not have any understanding of the processes of government and of legislation and implementation?

Of the issues promised in the last campaign and in the accord, finally last December we saw Bill 154, the broader public sector and private sector pay equity legislation. "Pay equity" is the new term that evolved between June 1985 and December 1986. In 1985, it was called "equal pay for work of equal value." That is what was promised to the people of Ontario. We finally got the bill, Bill 154, and what we ended up with was a piece of legislation that at the absolute minimum will exclude one quarter of the working women in Ontario from coverage; half a million women at an absolute minimum.

To everybody who was involved in the hearings around Bill 154, it is clear that the number of women who will be excluded is substantially larger than that half million because there are a number of exemptions in the bill. The Ministry of Labour, the Ontario women's directorate and the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology cannot tell us what those exemptions will mean in their application in the real world; nobody can tell us.

They do not know, for example, what the gender test built into the legislation will mean. They do not know how many job classes across the province will be excluded by the 60 per cent female, 70 per cent male comparison test in the legislation. They cannot tell us how many women will be excluded by the exemption of casuals in Ontario. When you combine the gender-predominance test and the regional or geographical notion of an establishment, they cannot tell us how many women will be left out of the legislation.

The estimates range from the minimum I suggested of half a million or one quarter of the working women in Ontario up to something more than a million or half of the working women in the province. That is this government's idea of universal pay equity legislation. We have not

even completed that bill yet, but the process has not been very pleasant, let me tell the members.

I raised in this House the other day with the Premier the question of bringing Ontario Hydro under control and making Ontario Hydro accountable to this Legislature and to this government. Three years ago, while standing on his feet in this House, the Premier said: "We are clear. We have been very specific about what we will do to bring Ontario Hydro into line and make it accountable to this Legislature." Yet in the two years since the government took office, we have seen absolutely no change in the relationship between Ontario Hydro and this government and this Legislature.

1700

Last July, the select committee on energy tabled its report in this House. The select committee made 20-odd recommendations. Most of those recommendations dealt with the relationship between government and Hydro, with amendments to the Power Corporation Act to alter that relationship to make it more accountable and a series of amendments to make changes to the Ontario Energy Board Act to allow greater power to the Ontario Energy Board to regulate publicly the processes, Hydro rate-setting processes, etc.

With a government that in March 1984 was clear about what it was going to do, with a committee report after months and months, in fact a whole year of study, that clearly sets out good, useful and concrete recommendations about specific changes, we still have a throne speech with not even a mention of the accountability of Ontario Hydro. The throne speech mentioned everything else in the world, but on one of the issues the Liberals fought hard on day after day while in opposition, the accountability of Ontario Hydro and the threat that Ontario Hydro posed to the financial stability of Ontario, there was not a single word in the throne speech.

During the 1981-85 parliament, I spent four years as the Environment critic for this caucus, the present Minister of Energy (Mr. Kerrio) spent about a year as Environment critic for the official opposition and the current Minister of Health spent the remainder of that period as Environment critic for the official opposition.

Last fall, we had a report tabled in this House by the Minister of Health. It was a report on a study commissioned by his predecessor in the former government, a report all of us had expressed very real interest in when the study was announced back in 1982. When the interim report of that study committee was tabled in

1983, we clamoured in 1983, 1984 and early 1985, demanding to know when and where we would see the final report. I was part of that clamouring and the present Minister of Health was part of that clamouring. It was an important issue that should not be delayed.

The site study committee report on the Upper Ottawa Street landfill site in the city of Hamilton, a landfill site used for 30 years as a dump for domestic, household garbage, but also as a dump for very seriously toxic chemical industrial wastes, was finally tabled in October 1986. In January 1987, both the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Health said they did not want to comment until after the public had been fully briefed on the content and import of that report and had time to respond. It is fair game, I guess.

We had public meetings in December and January in Hamilton with the affected people. I want members to understand something about that report and why I am so perturbed about inaction. There are all the horror stories we have heard over the past decade about the environment around this province and across the border. Some of the horror stories across the border have even been worse, with the Love Canal and the Hyde Park dump site moving out a whole community. We can all remember the rest of those horror stories because the vast majority of us were here when they were being debated.

The Upper Ottawa Street landfill site study committee report of October 1986 is the first report anywhere in North America that has clearly and conclusively proved the health linkage between the existence and the operation of the landfill site and the health effects on the workers at the site and in the community surrounding that site. It is the first study anywhere on this continent that conclusively proves that linkage. At the Love Canal in Niagara Falls, New York, they moved out a whole community without having a study that was this conclusive; in fact, without having much of a study at all at the time they moved the people out. We have the first study that conclusively proves the health linkage to the operation of the dump site.

To date, we have had absolutely no response from either the Minister of Health or the Minister of the Environment to any of the recommendations in that study; not one peep. The Minister of the Environment managed for the first year and a few months of the existence of this administration to win over the environment community in

Ontario as somebody who was going to move forward quickly and strongly.

However, for the past seven, eight or nine months this performance has been rapidly losing for this government the support of environmentalists across this province and the concerned citizens in the large number of communities across this province where there are serious environmental problems to be dealt with, such as the one I have just described. That decline in support will escalate very rapidly if we do not start hearing some response from this government, from its Minister of the Environment and from its Minister of Health on some extremely serious issues that face this province.

Just two days ago, my colleague the member for Lakeshore (Mrs. Grier), our present Environment critic, raised in this House an update question on the St. Clair River blob. Her question was focused on the fact that since that whole debate a year and a half ago on the St. Clair River blob, with all the focus about cleaning up the St. Clair River and protecting the drinking water of the communities that depend on the St. Clair River for their household and drinking water, there have been an additional 200 significant spills into the St. Clair River from the chemical industries in that area.

The Minister of the Environment's response is, "Is it not nice that we now have a system in place that lets us know it happened?" That is fine. We certainly want to know when spills of that nature happen, but my god, it is the drinking water we are trying to protect, not the knowledge that the drinking water has been contaminated that we are trying to protect. Certainly, we want to know when a spill occurs, but the primary objective has to be the elimination of those 200 significant spills in a year-and-a-half period if we have any inkling or any hope of being able to protect present and future generations in Ontario and the very environment of the province itself.

My colleague the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) probably made some comment about this in his remarks in response to the throne speech. My remarks will be a little more pointed perhaps than his were. I refer now to GO Transit.

1710

The GO Transit authority has sent us invitations to a 20th anniversary celebration a week this Saturday to celebrate 20 years of commuter transit under the GO Transit authority. Unfortunately for those of us in Oshawa and Hamilton, what we have to celebrate a week from Saturday is 20 years in which the previous government and the present government have failed to do what

was promised 20 years ago, which was to provide effective commuter transit links between Hamilton and Oshawa through the city of Toronto.

We are still waiting. Unfortunately, although there were a number of vague comments in the throne speech about the need for improved transportation and communications in Ontario, we in the city of Hamilton are still waiting to find out if and when we will ever see a full GO rail transit service to our city. We were fortunate enough to get one additional train a day out of this government last year, a government which I remind members promised full service—at least its local candidates in Hamilton promised full service.

So that the members can start to understand how this debate affects a city like Hamilton, let me say that we have a significant number of Hamiltonians who work here in Toronto. And yes, we have GO service into Hamilton. It is currently a bus service for the most part. We have three trains a day, but essentially we have a bus-based service into the city of Hamilton.

I do not know how many members get involved with the Queen Elizabeth Way between Hamilton and Toronto or between even St. Catharines and Toronto, and how many get involved with Highway 401 between here and Oshawa, but when I was elected 10 years ago the morning rush hour on the QEW started about 7:30 a.m. and ran through until just after nine o'clock. The afternoon rush hour started about four o'clock and ended almost right on the nose of six o'clock. During the rest of the day, that highway was a fairly quick route between Hamilton and Toronto and ultimately between points even farther down the peninsula. I imagine it was much the same on Highway 401 between here and Oshawa. Those rush hours now start at 6:30 a.m., not 7:30 a.m., and they extend until 11 a.m. The afternoon rush hour now starts about 2:45 p.m., and that rush hour does not finish until almost 7:30 in the evening.

All those GO Transit buses that are the base of our commuter link between Hamilton and Toronto get dumped out into that rush hour mess, and they sit there on the Gardiner, and they sit there at Highway 427, and they sit there at Highway 10, and they sit there at Oakville. They burn fuel and people get fidgety and waste time. Some people read the newspaper five times a day because there is nothing else to do on the bus. Some people take work on the bus, but other people cannot work with all those fumes and all that noise.

We are not very far from the time that if we do not make some major commuter transit decisions in the Golden Horseshoe, we will be looking at a really unworkable and perhaps unresolvable crisis. Yet a government party whose members promised quick, prompt action on resolving those issues has sat silent and continues to sit silent; no new initiatives.

In the accord after the last election, we were promised changes to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. I am not going to dwell very long on this, because this is one of the issues that happens to have been focused on here in the House. I simply wanted to make a couple of comments about it because I can recall that when I first came here, although occupational health and safety in Ontario, particularly the occupational disease side of that question, was just in its embryo stage in terms of political consciousness here, in terms of public consciousness out there in our ridings and communities across the province, I get half a dozen to 10 calls a week now on occupational health and safety issues. I do not recall having any at all in my first year as a member. Then a smattering started to come in over the course of my tenure here, but I am getting six to 10 calls a week now on occupational health and safety related matters.

I recall when this government first took office two years ago and the member for Windsor-Sandwich, now the Minister of Labour, was first appointed minister and made his first few statements in this House and his first few speaking engagements out there in Ontario. There were a lot of trade union and working people who were saying: "Hey, this guy sounds like he is going to be pretty good. Maybe, for a change, we will be able to get something done."

When I get those six to 10 calls a week now on occupational health and safety questions, I not only get the complaint about the occupational health or the occupational safety problem which confronts that worker or group of workers, but also I get the comment: "When are you going to be able to get that Wrye off his behind to do something? When are they going to get enough inspectors so that we can get somebody in here?"

The sense of optimism which was clearly there in spades two years ago, and that sense that we have to give them some time to make the changes, to bring in the legislation, to find the staff, to train the staff to make the system work—that sense of optimism is disappearing very quickly. Certainly nobody out there was impressed with the comments in this throne

speech about occupational health and safety changes in Ontario.

On Workers' Compensation Board reform—that was something this government promised, both in the election campaign and in the accord with this party—we have seen nothing in this House in the way of legislative change, reform of the act itself, the act that provides the benefits and the approach to benefits for injured workers in Ontario.

We have seen some initiatives with the Workers' Compensation Board, though. We have seen those established and some announced. We now have regional offices. The member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) mentioned he was happy to have the announcement about the workers' adviser office in Timmins, which is going to be opening up at some point in the future, I cannot remember what the date was now. We got a workers' adviser office in Hamilton and we also got a Workers' Compensation Board office. We used to have just a rehabilitation counselling office. Now we have virtually a full operation there in the city of Hamilton, although it does not yet have the capability of handling all of the adjudicator-level appeals, we are still hearing some of them here and some people are still being sent through to Toronto for pension assessments.

But for all intents and purposes, we have, supposedly at least, most of the infrastructure to deal with all those things the Workers' Compensation Board is supposed to deal with in relation to injured workers.

1720

Yes, we expressed sincere happiness when the announcement was made two years ago—or I guess not even quite two years ago, it will be a year ago last September—we expressed thanks to the government for the initiative. But we ended up with an office that opened up that fall, with some expert staff but totally understaffed, that did not really get operating until mid-spring last year.

It now has what it claims is a full complement of staff, and for the things we used to complain about that were being handled here on Bloor Street, for the things that in some cases used to take us two weeks and we said that was too long and that was inexcusable, and for those things that used to take five months and we said that was too long and that was inexcusable, and the minister always agreed, we have now doubled and tripled the time frames in the new office in Hamilton that was supposed to provide better

local service for injured workers in Hamilton and Brantford and Burlington and so on.

We have an operation there that is a disaster. There is no staff organization that you can detect in terms of organizational lines of responsibility. There are staff there that have never been trained at all. They have been hired straight off the street and stuck behind the desk, and they do not know what they are doing. We have people sitting on files for three months. Then when you phone them, they are not even sure they have it, because the piles of files on their desks are so high they have to phone you back four hours later and tell you, "Yes, I found it on top of my desk."

We were thankful to get that operation in Hamilton, but until the commitment is made to make that operation a service-oriented operation and not just a sign and an address, the injured workers in the city of Hamilton are not being well served, and their great expectations and growing love two years ago for the present administration in Ontario is going downhill very quickly.

I have a couple of other items I would like to touch on very quickly. One is the announcement of two weeks ago and the introduction today by the Minister of Financial Institutions (Mr. Kwinter) of his legislation to control, supposedly, auto insurance rates in Ontario.

We have been out there doing mass mailings and canvassing with auto insurance leaflets. We did our task force, we had hearings all across the province, and we know what the problems out there are and how the drivers in this province feel about those problems.

This government and this minister may get some short-term mileage out of this package that was introduced today. It is not going to take very long, because the people in this province get renewal notices on a fairly regular basis, for the drivers in Ontario to understand that the protection in this package of protection that was introduced today does not exist in this package. It is not going to take very long, as my colleague said in his comments this afternoon, for those young drivers who thought that, at the very least, they were going to get a 10 per cent reduction out of this package, to find out that because they are already in the top bracket and the insurance companies cannot bump them up to the next bracket in the market system, they are going to be the ones the insurance companies refuse to renew. They will not even get their 10 per cent reduction on a 20 per cent increase, which my colleague was talking about this afternoon. They will get dumped into the Facility Association and

they will be paying \$2,800, \$2,900, \$3,000 or worse.

As other people get bumped-up categories because of one minor accident—because theoretically the only way the insurance company can get an increase is to bump them up a category—people who used to be able to get two speeding tickets but had nothing else happen and never got an increase are going to get an increase up a category because they get a speeding ticket or because they have a minor bumper-thumper.

This insurance package will not hold water for very long. In the two weeks since the announcement, we have already heard the cases being raised here in the House about people, who because of the announcement expected that they were not going to get an increase, or at least not a significant one, getting bumped up significant dollars. It will not hold water very long.

The other issue I want to raise quickly goes back to the area of the environment and the Countdown Acid Rain program which was announced a year and a half ago by the Minister of the Environment. I want to link my comments on this to the comments I made earlier about my discussions the other day with the Premier about controlling Ontario Hydro and making it accountable to this Legislature, an issue on which the Liberal Party in this province has fought hard for a decade, an issue about which the Liberal Party in this province has done nothing since it became government.

There have been no changes to the Power Corporation Act, there have been no changes to the Ontario Energy Board Act and there have been no changes even in the policy relationship between government and Ontario Hydro. Because of that and the way the Hydro process is totally internalized—Hydro does all its own studies and then sends the government the answer after it has looked at all the questions and eliminated the ones it does not like—it managed to hoodwink a government that should have known better.

In the Countdown Acid Rain program it managed to convince this government to allow it to have a banking program which would allow it—if you can believe this, Mr. Speaker—to save pollution emissions, to bank them and to draw on that bank if it runs into problems. I have heard of lots of good savings programs that probably had good, long-term benefits for individuals, societies and pension groups—but a savings program where you save pollution to use in the future? Can one imagine how that could be used

internationally in the debate around acid rain abatement?

This government was duped. It was duped because all it gets is the end piece. It does not get any of the studies. It does not get to look at the alternatives. It gets Ontario Hydro walking into the office, having done all that and having eliminated the parts of the process it does not want anybody to know about, and putting what it says is the only solution on the governments' desk.

After the hearings, the Liberal members of the select committee on the environment, which just tabled its report on Monday, understood that the banking provision had to be eliminated from the control regulation. That is the committee's report to this House. The only question is, why did that happen in the first place? Why could not the minister and the expert staff in the Ministry of Energy see the same things the Liberal members, the Conservative members and the two New Democrats on the select committee saw?

Mr. McGuigan: It is open government.

1730

Mr. Charlton: Again, that is not my concern at this point. My concern is that there has been no action over the course of the last two years to alter the relationship between government and Ontario Hydro, to change that accountability mechanism and to take up the recommendations of the select committee on energy last year on regulation of Hydro's operations by the Ontario Energy Board and hearings on its planning process, where all the alternatives have to be looked at instead of hidden in an internal process.

It is because we have not taken any action to make those changes that Ontario Hydro got away with fooling the Minister of the Environment and his expert staff and the Minister of Energy and his expert staff. It is because we have not proceeded with those changes. Until this government is prepared to make those changes, members of this government will be made to look like fools on a number of occasions in the future by Hydro because they will not know the answers.

I am not concerned about whether the Liberals think their government has been open. They may feel they have been open with this House, but Ontario Hydro has not been open with them and they have not done anything about it.

In closing, there is a whole range of important things that the Liberal Party, now the government of Ontario, has said to the people of Ontario on repeated occasions that it was prepared and ready to proceed with. Two years later, in this throne speech—the throne speech that, theoretic-

cally, subject to an election, takes us through the third year—we have no mention of this whole range of issues that the government said two years ago it was ready to proceed with.

If this government wants to survive in Ontario, it is going to have to do better than proceeding with 60 per cent of the items in the accord that it signed with our party two years ago. That figure of 60 per cent is not even a true figure, because on pay equity and freedom of information the government certainly has not proceeded in the way the promise was perceived two years ago.

It has at least proceeded, and that is a positive aspect, but if this government wants to survive it is going to have to do far better. It is going to have to be far more imaginative and far more capable of making decisions than to accomplish nothing more than 60 per cent of an accord that it negotiated with an opposition party.

If the government wants to be able to demonstrate leadership to the people of Ontario, it will have to start providing them with answers, followed by decisions and implementation, or all that high rating it is receiving out there at present will start to disappear very quickly.

In May 1985, the people of this province voted for a change, and they still have the sense that the change is happening. In major sectors that I have already laid out today, however, the sense is already starting that there really is not any difference. Now is the time, during the budget next week, that the people of Ontario will be watching very closely. If there are not a whole lot of new ideas and initiatives flowing out of the promises that have been made over the course of the last number of years, public opinion of this government will start to change very quickly. We will see yet again, after only two short years, the beginning of a new political era in Ontario.

Mr. Breagh: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: We have been maligned somewhat in the last week for being so bold as to use the rules of the House to set aside the throne speech debate for an emergency debate. Unfortunately, we are into a throne speech debate this afternoon, but I am not sure I see a quorum in the chamber.

Mr. Warner: There is a distinct lack of interest on behalf of the people who wanted to be here to have this debate, namely, the Liberals.

Mr. Speaker ordered the bells rung.

1736

Mr. Callahan: It gives me great pleasure to rise in my place and participate in this throne speech debate.

At the outset, it is somewhat important to let the people at home know what the rules are, that

the opposition parties always have nothing other than negatives about any throne speech of the government. Perhaps that will explain to the people out there who have been watching the official opposition, the Conservative Party, and the third party, the New Democratic Party, being so absolutely negative that one would have to wonder if they in fact had read the throne speech, had it read to them, or perhaps fed to them. Quite frankly, I am very enthusiastic about what I see in the throne speech of this government.

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: I do not think the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere (Mr. Warner) is in the proper place to even interject.

Mr. Callahan: It is hard to tell when the member for Scarborough-Ellesmere is in his seat.

In any event, I would like to continue. It is very exciting to see a throne speech build on a throne speech previously given in this House by this government and demonstrate that there is planning, that it is not just a shotgun approach, which, in reading some of the former throne speeches of the Conservative government, was the case.

I have to say as well that the promises, the statements made in that throne speech have gone a long way towards accomplishing or fulfilling many of the reasons I ran for a seat in the provincial Legislature. I ran in the 1975 and 1981 elections because I recognized that in the city of Brampton, which was one of the fastest-growing communities in Ontario, many of the things were not being looked after by the former government.

Overcrowding in our schools was taking place. The hospital we had in Brampton, Peel Memorial Hospital, although an excellent facility, had great need for beds because of the growing population. The waiting time at emergency was up to five and six hours. I could see this was going to continue to grow simply because the people who were coming to my community, to my riding, were people who were newly arrived and had perhaps not established a relationship with a doctor and were taking their services outside of the riding.

I urged upon my council colleagues at that time that something dramatic had to be done. I took the step of trying to persuade them not to allow any further development in the city. I had hoped by that step to stimulate the Conservative government of the day—as Mr. Speaker and all members will know, that riding was represented by the former Premier of this province, William Davis—to take some action to recognize that,

because of this dramatic growth, people were being denied access to appropriate buildings for education and were being denied or delayed their rights to access to appropriate health care.

One of the conundrums of my entire political life, in terms of being on council or being in the Legislature, is that I will never understand why, in the 1975 and 1981 elections, when I dogged the former member with these specific issues, nothing ever took place. When I look at the throne speech and I see that there are statements made, some of which have already been fulfilled in terms of establishing further buildings in which our young people in the riding of Brampton and throughout Ontario can be properly educated, it makes me feel good.

In the days on council, with the tremendous growth that was taking place, the approach that was taken was that you put a sign up outside of each new development, which said, "We regret to tell you that your children may not be able to be educated in this area and may have to be bused elsewhere." The hospital difficulties we had urged me one night to suggest to my council colleagues that perhaps we should put up a sign saying: "You may not be able to receive your health care services in this community. You may have to be bused elsewhere."

I am pleased to say that, in general, the throne speech addresses that issue. The Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) has already addressed that issue to a significant point in my community and in that of my colleague the member for Mississauga North (Mr. Offer), in that some \$52 million plus was allotted to the region of Peel to service both the separate and public school capital needs. Unfortunately, that does not go to complete the inadequacy that has existed and has arisen because of the growth and the lack of appreciation by the former Conservative government of that growth. I have learned, as my colleague has, from speaking with the public school board, that it needs some \$50 million to \$80 million just to catch up with capital structures. The separate school board needs almost the same amount.

Portable upon portable is available for education in my community. Comments from the other side say, "Nothing has been done." I suggest a very giant step has been taken by this government, in this particular throne speech, to start along the road of trying to address the particular difficulty I and my colleague have in Peel region, and most specifically in the riding of Brampton.

I am optimistic, in looking at the previous throne speech and the way this throne speech

builds on it, that we will have the opportunity to meet the commitment of providing proper facilities for the young people of the riding of Brampton, as well as the region of Peel and throughout Ontario, over a period of time.

Within two years, this government has taken giant steps to solve many of the problems that arose as a result of inactivity on the part of the former Conservative government, its perhaps being asleep at the switch and not recognizing that Ontario was changing. Along those lines, I might say I am very pleased to see in the throne speech that recognition has been made of the pluralistic society that Ontario has come to be. I suggest steps have been taken in that respect by establishing health facilities and health services that can be provided to the many people who make up the diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds of our people.

I am very pleased as well to see that this government is taking a far more realistic approach in the throne speech—not just this one, but the one previously—to the question of seniors. The attitude in the past, as near as I can figure from what went on, was simply to provide places to house them. There was no sensitive, planned approach to trying to keep seniors in their homes as long as possible, to try to provide them with the services they require from a health standpoint and from other standpoints. That is addressed in this speech from the throne; so I find it absolutely incomprehensible that anyone in either the official opposition or the third party could make statements like, "There is nothing in this throne speech."

I suggest that if that was all that was in the throne speech—the schools, the hospitals and the seniors—that in itself would be significant enough to get a round of applause from everyone in this Legislature. I do not expect that to happen.

The most incredible thing I have ever run into is that I attended the Peel Literacy Guild in Mississauga and discovered that in the region of Peel there are some 40,000 people who are illiterate. How did that happen? Did that happen overnight, or did that happen over 42 years: how did it happen? More important, our government looked at that issue and said: "It happened. We are not going to go back to history and say why it happened. We are going to address that issue."

In fact, very early on in our forming the government, the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) set up a breakfast, which was attended by many of my colleagues and Frontier College, and we discussed this very issue. As a result of that, in the throne speech we find efforts directed

towards trying to solve not only the question of traditional illiteracy but also that of the illiteracy of the future in terms of bringing knowledge of the computer to our young people so they are able to compete and to get on with the 21st century. To me, that is looking after the most essential commodity, or one of the many most essential commodities of our entire province, our young people.

I am also pleased to see that our government has recognized that the drop-out situation has to be rectified. I can tell members that over all the years I practised my former profession and had to read about reports being made on young people who had gotten in trouble with the law, there were two basic reasons that wended their way through each one of the difficulties these people had got into. One was being illiterate, and the other one was that they had a learning disability which had gone undiagnosed and, as a result of it, they were pushed on through school. Eventually they lost any semblance of respect for themselves and wound up in trouble.

For that reason, I am pleased to see that our government has had the sensitivity to recognize that and to recognize that we should have consideration of early childhood training and education. If that emphasis is what I think it is, it will give us an opportunity to locate or to find some of these problems of learning disabilities and so on in our young people early on in life so they can in fact be corrected. I suggest that with that being done, it will certainly make for a much brighter future for a lot more young people in Ontario and, accordingly, will reduce the numbers of them who perhaps will lose respect for themselves and wind up in the criminal justice system.

It is an absolute pleasure to see the university funding and the facilities upgraded. During the last election, and perhaps even the one in 1981 that I ran in, I recall making the statements to the voters that the university system and its funding had become depleted because the previous Conservative government, when it received transitional grants from the federal government did not apply them towards that purpose and in fact diverted them to other means. I suggest that our government, not only through the throne speech but also through announcements that have been made by the Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara), has gone a long way towards upgrading this particular difficulty.

I look at things such as the assistive devices. It is perhaps looked at as a small item in this throne speech, but if one looks at the previous throne

speech, the age at which you can receive assistive devices has been moved up. I suspect there will be further advancements in terms of assistive devices for people.

One of the things that made me feel very sensitive during the last election was the concern I had for young people who would receive a prosthesis which was paid for at that time. As they grew or as they wore them out in terms of the activities of a young person, they could not acquire another one without paying for it or without getting it through some charitable source. Again, I suggest a sensitive approach has been taken by this government, and that makes me proud to be a member of this government and to be able to stand up and speak on the throne speech.

1750

Sheltered workshops: it is indicated in the throne speech that there is going to be a reform of the sheltered workshop system to increase employment opportunities for the developmentally handicapped. I applaud that because, in the past, people who were handicapped were placed in a workshop where the work they were doing could not have given them a great deal of pride about themselves. The attitude in the past has been, "These people are developmentally handicapped so we will give them something very menial to do." I am pleased to see there is going to be a restructuring of that, because I anticipate that restructuring will go a long way towards not just providing work for people who have a disability but providing them with work they can perform and have a good feeling about themselves, and advance as best they can, to the extent they can, to become productive citizens of Ontario.

I am pleased to see the government has also looked at the question of waste management. In my community, we have a difficulty now in that we are locating, not a gravel pit but a—

Mr. Breagh: Yes, what is it?

Mr. Callahan: I am trying to think. Give me a chance; help me out. They are establishing a landfill site. The process in establishing it, even coming to the selection on which the region itself agreed, has been a very lengthy procedure. It has gone on over numerous years and has kept citizens of my riding on tenterhooks, because there were locations all over the riding. They have finally come down to a specific site, and because our government now requires—as opposed to what the Conservatives had—an environmental assessment hearing, there will be a

hearing to determine where that site should best be located.

I would submit that the throne speech goes beyond that. The traditional burying of garbage and perhaps ravaging of good agricultural land and the interference with residents in the community are things that should be looked at as ancient history. We should be looking at the technology of the future in recycling. We should be looking at things such as incineration. Although it is not spelled out, that may very well be what we are moving towards. I applaud that action on the part of the government.

I am pleased to see as well that despite all the years domestic workers were sort of left out in a category of their own, through the throne speech and the promises made therein they will be covered under protection of the Employment Standards Act for the first time. I applaud that. That is a recognition of people who have been left out in the cold and who should not have been left out in the cold.

I am also pleased to see we are now recognizing that the schools we create for the education of our young people for eight hours a day, perhaps eight months of the year, are community facilities that are going to be used for purposes other than just educating our children. The government is recognizing a need in the changing society of Ontario, that child care spaces are absolutely necessary, and has recommended through the throne speech the innovation of placing these child care units in each new school built hereafter.

I would submit that is a first step towards using our community facilities for more than just educating our young people. I can recall back many years ago when we were having difficulties in locating libraries in neighbourhoods in our community. I suggested to our council that we should use our school buildings and that any new school building built should have a library on the main floor which would serve as a local library for the neighbourhood, as well as an excellent library for the students, thereby getting full dollar value out of that building.

I would hope to be able to persuade my colleagues in the government that this being a first step towards providing to the people a community service in the school buildings that are used for education, there might also be that introduction of library services and perhaps other facilities that might be available to neighbourhoods. I would prefer that, rather than having such units built in a single area of a particular riding, requiring transportation to that location

and requiring extra money being spent on those additional buildings.

I have to go back to the question of the schools, in that I spoke with my school board and it was certainly pleased with the steps that had been taken. We were able to obtain in Brampton two elementary schools that were absolutely beyond waiting any longer. This means that young people will now have built for them two brand-new elementary schools in the Fletchers Creek area and the Heart Lake area which are in fact high-growth areas in the riding of Brampton. In addition to that, we were able to secure some \$3.2 million to start on Notre Dame high school in Heart Lake, which is also a high-growth area. For that reason I am very thankful.

It is time that steps were taken towards trying to provide definitive places to which young people can go for treatment of alcohol and drug addiction. If we are to make certain that the future citizens of Ontario are going to be able to reach maturity and continue on with a full life without the addictions of the present day, and perhaps previous days, then we have to provide, quite frankly, the available and accessible help to them.

In regard to the question of affordable housing, I suppose it is a bit of a shock for a person from the riding of Brampton, where, thank god, we do not have anybody sleeping on the streets yet, to come to Toronto and find a citizen lying on the street and people walking by him as though it was an everyday event. I suspect that perhaps it has come to the stage in a large city where that it is an everyday event. I am very pleased to see that the government is approaching that particular situation.

They are to expand programs of integrated housing and support services for the homeless and people with special needs. That is well in itself. It is certainly a reflection of the humanity that this government has. It also demonstrates in a very real fashion the new wind that has blown through Ontario with a caring attitude, one that is planning for the future.

I am encouraged to see that the government will encourage home owners and municipalities to explore creative approaches to low-cost housing. In the past, municipalities have waited for a lead from the provincial government. That has reduced the amount of stock that we have available for these people to a limited capacity. For that reason, it is good to see this commitment and this joining of hands to establish that purpose.

Mr. Speaker: I am just wondering if I may interrupt the member. If you have a number of other matters you wish to bring before the House, you might want to adjourn the debate and do that at a further time.

Mr. Mancini: He is doing quite well; I think he should continue.

Mr. Warner: Let him continue his remarks while we are not here.

Mr. Callahan: Mr. Speaker, I am not certain whether I should take that as unanimous consent to continue or whether you are asking me to adjourn the debate.

Mr. Speaker: It is six of the clock now and this would be the appropriate time if the honourable member would move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Callahan: I would then move to adjourn the debate.

On motion by Mr. Callahan, the debate was adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: The acting House leader may wish to make an announcement.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: I ask unanimous consent to revert to motions.

Agreed to.

MOTION

COMMITTEE SITTING

Hon. Mr. Van Horne moved that the standing committee on social development be authorized to meet following routine proceedings on Tuesday, May 19, 1987.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: As acting House leader, I would like to indicate the business of the House for the coming week.

On Monday, May 18, the House will not sit because of the Victoria Day holiday.

On Tuesday, May 19, until 4:15 p.m., we will deal with third readings of Bill 52, the Health Protection and Promotion Act, standing in the name of the member for Rainy River (Mr. Pierce), plus government Bill 176, the Nursing Homes Act, and Bill 177, the Health Facilities Special Orders Act, followed by second reading of Bill 6, An Act to amend the Regional Municipality of Haldimand Norfolk Act, and Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act, and the motion for interim supply as time permits.

At 4:15 p.m., by agreement of the House leaders, the throne speech debate will wind up. The time until 5:45 will be shared and at 5:45 the vote on the throne speech will be held.

On Wednesday, May 20, until 4 p.m., we will continue with legislation not completed on Tuesday plus committee of the whole and third reading of Bill 188, the Retail Business Holidays Act, standing in the name of Mr. Ashe. At 4 p.m., the 1987 budget will be presented to the House.

On Thursday morning, May 21, we will consider private members' ballot items standing in the names of the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon) and the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris). Thursday afternoon will be devoted to the budget response by the official opposition. Any time remaining will be spent on business not completed on Wednesday.

The House adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

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Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament
Tuesday, May 19, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer
Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Tuesday, May 19, 1987

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

NURSING HOMES

Mr. Sheppard: I would like to express my sincere concern, and that of my constituency, with respect to the core government funding provided to Ontario nursing homes. Elderly people today have increased lifespans. Health care needs have grown more demanding, not to mention more complex.

In recent years, medical advances and growth in community-based services have allowed elderly people to remain at home longer. As a result, many residents require more care than ever before upon entering a nursing home. Because of this, nursing homes and their staffs are straining to provide services that far exceed their original mandate with the present funding levels.

Caring for the elderly is a subject that concerns all of us, now and in the future. We would all like to believe that we would be able to live out our later years in relative self-sufficiency. However, for many of us, a long-term-care facility may be the only alternative. We know that nursing homes fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, while homes for the aged fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. But these are ministries of the same government, a government that promised universal equality of health care to all of its citizens.

I strongly urge that this discriminating factor be examined and corrected in order for the government to fulfil that promise.

MEMORIAL CUP

Mr. Breagh: I am bearing sad news today. I do not know how this happened, but on Saturday afternoon at the Civic Auditorium, a hockey team from Medicine Hat, Alberta, won the Memorial Cup, and on that afternoon it was the better team.

It happens to the best of us, I suppose. What we lost here was a hockey game and the bragging rights to the Memorial Cup, but what we gained

over a very long season was an impressive display of ability by a group of young men known as the Oshawa Generals. We want to congratulate the organization and the team itself. They did have a very long season. They had a little trouble with the team from North Bay, which kept coming back. We had to beat them twice in order to get into the finals, but we like this hockey team. You will see a lot more of the members of this team as they go on through their professional careers. They did us proud; they did Ontario proud.

I had the pleasure and the pain of sitting amidst the Medicine Hat fans on Saturday afternoon. I knew I was in trouble when they all showed up with their orange-and-black streamers. They told me they had a good time in Oshawa all week long, and I know for a fact that they had a better time Saturday afternoon than I did. We congratulate the Medicine Hat Tigers for a very fine display.

LOAN AND TRUST CORPORATIONS ACT

Mr. D. R. Cooke: Later today I will have the honour of reporting out of committee what I understand to be the longest bill in the history of this Legislature and the first corporate commercial bill to be considered clause by clause in committee in both official languages. Of course, I am speaking of Bill 116, an act which will establish a new procedure for incorporation and regulation of loan and trust companies to prevent the scandals that we have had in the past—such as the Seaway, Crown and Greymac Trust scandals—and to protect the public by creating a new and tougher standard and duty of care.

Perhaps this is an appropriate time to say, in view of the tight work schedule of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs, that I would like to compliment the ministry for its co-operation, and the witnesses in particular, as well as all three parties, in getting this matter through the clause-by-clause stage. I think I see all three House leaders here today, and I trust we will have clear sailing for third reading.

GASOLINE PRICES

Mr. Harris: The tourist season is now under way. This morning I drove from North Bay to

Toronto. As I hit the Gravenhurst area, I saw gasoline prices of 36.9 to 36.2 cents per litre. The most common price at 20 or 30 stations was 36.7 cents per litre, about eight cents a litre or 50 cents a gallon lower than at North Bay or Sudbury, and perhaps up to \$1 less than in other parts of the north.

Today is the last chance for the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon). Tomorrow his budget spending will be more than 30 per cent higher than in our last budget. That is an increase, in three years, of inflation plus an extra \$5 billion—a staggering free-spending figure, a provincial disgrace and, I might add, very dangerous for this province.

With all this money, I urge the Treasurer to call his Treasury officials and tell them to change two items on page 3 of his budget statement. First, instead of trying to buy votes with a piddling \$100 tax credit that does not solve the problem, he should give northerners what they want and deserve and completely eliminate the gas tax in northern Ontario. Second, he should tell them to change the wording of the four-laning announcement on page 3 that now says, "Higher gas prices will pay for the start-up of the four-laning projects that we put on hold for two years," and tell us that the government will pay for the four-laning and transportation in the north—the same as everywhere else in the province—out of the general revenue, not by ripping us off with higher gas prices.

AWARD FOR TREASURER

Mr. Pouliot: My task this afternoon is most pleasurable indeed. On the eve of our provincial budget, on behalf of our caucus, I have the honour to present our first international monetary award to the Honourable Robert "London Bobby" Nixon, on the occasion of his 1987 British tour, in recognition of his truly liberal interpretation of creative financing and his demonstrated commitment to artificially stimulating our economy.

Our Treasurer may be penny wise indeed, but he is very pound foolish.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Mr. Hennessy: It is appalling that the Ontario government and the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who is also Minister of Northern Development and Mines, have no comment on, nor have they taken any action to oppose the plan to ditch Via Rail's purchase of rail cars designed by the Urban Transportation Development Corp. This government talks long and loud about its commitment to

the north, but when it comes time to take action that will provide real jobs, real action for northern Ontario, it falls silent.

1340

Workers at UTDC's Can-Car Rail facility in Thunder Bay are concerned. They can read the headlines. The papers say the cancellation of the Via Rail deal will cost the taxpayers of Ontario \$190 million. The workers want to know how many jobs the cancellation would cost. They deserve to know from this government. Let us not hide behind the press releases. Let us not hide behind the election threats of the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon).

Let us hear from this government, the Premier and the minister today. Will Ontario fight for UTDC'S proposed deal with Via Rail? How many jobs will the Via Rail cancellation cost Thunder Bay? When will this government come forward with a co-ordinated plan for industrial development in the north? The people of Thunder Bay and Fort William deserve to know what the government is going to do about this because it is going to cost a lot of jobs. A lot of jobs are going to be terminated in September or October of this year, and we will have mass unemployment in Thunder Bay.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Charlton: I would like to thank the board of directors of GO Transit for inviting me to their 20th anniversary bash this coming Saturday at Ontario Place. Unfortunately, I will not be able to attend because of a previous commitment. I will be in Hamilton, along with the member for Hamilton East (Mr. Mackenzie) and the member for Hamilton West (Mr. Allen), attending a celebration of a different kind in relation to GO Transit.

I understand from my colleague the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) that the good folks of Oshawa will also be gathering the same day. We at both ends of the GO Transit system will be celebrating 20 years of noncompletion of the rail system to our respective cities. It is sad indeed when the commuters of Hamilton and Oshawa have to gather to commemorate an event such as this.

I also ask that the government not give us the standard Tory gift that has become so common. Please, let it not promise us completion of the train lines in Hamilton and Oshawa. We do not need to be jerked around again by another false promise from the government's celebrating 20 years of false promises. No more talk; let the

government just get the damned thing completed.

Mr. Speaker: The member for York Centre for 30 seconds.

HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Mr. Cousens: I continue to cry for the need of Highway 407. The chairman of the region of York gave me a letter last week that said: "Highway 407 is needed now. The progressive and substantial growth that has occurred in southern York region and northern Metro has been a boon to the provincial economy, but has imposed upon us an inadequate transportation system."

If there is anything that is going to come out of the budget tomorrow, let us hope that this government will respond to the cries of all the mayors of the region of York, the MPPs of York and the developers of York to give us Highway 407.

Mr. Speaker: The member's time has expired. That completes the allotted time for members' statements.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott: Later today, I will introduce for first reading the Children's Law Reform Amendment Act. This important bill, the first government bill of its kind in Canada, will introduce remedies for custodial and noncustodial parents with respect to the rights and obligations to exercise access to children.

The bill reflects one very significant principle. That principle is that where a court has determined that a child's interests are best served by access to a noncustodial parent, adequate remedy should be available to advance the best interests of that child. The purpose of our bill is to maintain relationships between parents and children.

Access to a child by a noncustodial parent is something which is in the child's interest, not something which should be used to continue a dispute between parents. Access orders are therefore orders for children, and yet the existing methods of access enforcement are totally unsatisfactory.

For example, a parent who is entitled to see his or her child but is wrongfully denied access to the child has little recourse other than to ask the court to jail or fine the custodial parent for contempt or, in very serious cases, to order a reversal of custody. Those remedies are, to me, not only

unsatisfactory; they also clearly do not serve the individual most directly affected—the child. Fines deprive a family of much-needed support and jail sentences only deprive a child of a parent for a time.

The bill I am introducing today provides some new, sensible and clear remedies for both custodial and noncustodial parents confronted with access problems. The bill introduces a new, simple, speedy remedy for the enforcement of access provisions of an order made under provincial law or contained in a separation agreement. Persons entitled to access to a child on specific days or at a specific time but wrongfully denied that access may make a motion to the court for relief. The motion must be heard within three days of being served.

If the court is satisfied that access to a child was wrongfully denied—and criteria are supplied to assist the court in making this determination—the court may require the custodial parent to give compensatory access to the noncustodial parent. This compensatory or makeup access will be ordered only if the court considers it to be in the best interests of the child.

On such motions, the court can order that access be supervised or require reimbursement of the noncustodial parent for any reasonable expenses actually incurred as a result of the wrongful denial. The court may require the custodial parent to post security for the performance of his or her obligation to give the noncustodial parent access to the child.

In addition, and most important, the court, at the request of the parties, may also appoint a mediator to assist them in resolving their differences over access.

Remedies are also provided where the noncustodial parent has wrongfully failed to exercise access. The court may require the noncustodial parent to reimburse the custodial parent for any reasonable expenses actually incurred or require the noncustodial parent to give security for the performance of his or her obligation to exercise the right of access in the future.

These remedies will be available for both provincial orders and separation agreements. For constitutional reasons, it cannot apply to orders under the Divorce Act, which is federal legislation. At a meeting of Attorneys General at the end of this month, I will be urging my federal counterpart to adopt similar legislation for orders under the Divorce Act in order that all children of separated parents in Ontario may have the benefit of this legislation when it is needed.

In addition, a specific protection has been incorporated to ensure that cases involving the possible risk of serious physical or emotional harm to the child are handled with sensitivity. A belief that there is a substantial risk of harm is a valid reason for a denial of access by the custodial parent.

I have mentioned the fact that parties would have access to mediation for such services. I wish simply to draw the attention of the members of this House to the fact that on March 31, 1987, I announced the creation of the Advisory Committee on Mediation in Family Law. This committee will examine the role of mediation in family law and make recommendations to the ministry on the establishment of a comprehensive mediation pilot project. The committee comprises prominent members of the legal profession as well as mediators and government representatives. I expect that this committee will report its findings to me by the end of this year.

I believe these are important initiatives in the important area of family law. They are intended to enhance the ongoing relationship between persons entitled to access and their children, and determine whether new alternatives are available to assist families in dealing with some of the difficult problems that confront them when marriages break down.

I know the bill will receive careful consideration by my colleagues in the House, the legal profession and the public. I look forward to suggestions from all sides of the House and to discussing the bill with them in the near future.

RESPONSES

CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. O'Connor: The Attorney General (Mr. Scott) wants suggestions; he will certainly get them from this side of the House.

Perhaps the Attorney General is unaware that there is already a Children's Law Reform Amendment Act before this House, Bill 8, which has been before the House for some three months now and was reintroduced in this session. The bill deals with exactly the same issues as are intended to be dealt with by the bill the Attorney General is suggesting be introduced this afternoon. However, there is a significant difference, and the Attorney General is well aware of this difference. Not only is he late, he is wrong in his approach to this particular issue.

His solution to the question of access difficulties between separated and divorced parents, who are unfortunately choosing to fight over the

children of the marriage, is what in the business is called "stacked access." He refers to it as compensatory access. It is a process whereby, if access is denied by the custodial parent, the noncustodial parent has the opportunity to go to court and seek an order whereby that access can be made up at a second or subsequent or stacked or compensatory access session.

The difficulty with that, quite obviously, is that the parents are warring with each other to the extent that one of them has denied access to the children. How is that difficulty between them going to be resolved by doubling up the access, by requiring that person to double up the access which he or she has already denied because he or she hates his or her partner so much?

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Obviously, it is only going to exacerbate the situation. The answer to the problem is as set out in Bill 8, the bill already before the House on this same subject, which suggests that the approach should be one of mandatory mediation whereby the court has the opportunity of ordering the parents to attend before a skilled mediator, a person who, in a series of sessions with the two parties, can break down the barriers of ill will and hatred between them with a view to trying to resolve the differences between them.

I can tell the Attorney General from some considerable study in this area that the mandatory mediation approach is one which is much preferred by everybody involved in the system, from the groups of parents seeking access who are having difficulty to the social workers who are trying to deal with this problem, and the legal profession which inevitably gets involved.

Hon. Mr. Scott: How about the women? Women are opposed to it.

Mr. O'Connor: The Attorney General says, "How about the women?" The women, who are for the most part the ones who are denying access, have some difficulty with the mediation approach. But why should they? If they are being required to resolve their differences by discussion and mediation, inevitably the barriers will be broken down and the problem will be resolved. I suggest the Attorney General is late and he is wrong on his approach. He will find that out during the deliberations on and reaction to his bill, which will inevitably come in the days and weeks to follow.

Ms. Gigantes: In response to the Attorney General's announcement that he will be introducing legislation affecting access procedures which will provide speedier relief in situations where

people who have a legal right to access have been denied access, I want to say very briefly that we will look upon that legislation with great interest.

I have two points in response to the Attorney General. I think it very strange that he is proceeding with this kind of legislation and with the setting up of an advisory committee dealing with access when he and his colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) have not been able to mediate among themselves about how they can provide the funding required for a very good service providing access for parents, based in the riding of Lakeshore.

That has been brought to their attention many times and there has not been any resolution of that difficulty. We might suggest mandatory mediation for them, where it would not be acceptable in the form that is being proposed by the spokesperson for the Conservative Party.

I ask members at this stage in the discussions, which are obviously very preliminary on this matter, to consider whether the notion of mandatory mediation is not a statement of two contrary notions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Grossman: In the absence of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), who now has been absent for four of the 11 question periods since the throne speech, I have a question for the Attorney General.

It was indicated by the Quebec Minister responsible for Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs, during public hearings in Quebec on the Meech Lake accord, that Quebec was now prepared to move a new clause to permit the opting out of federal cost-share programs. He specifically cited the interpretation the Attorney General of Ontario had placed on that accord item and indicated how different that was from the Quebec government's understanding.

Given the fact that Quebec is now preparing to move a significant amendment to the Meech Lake accord and given the fact that it is premised in part upon the Attorney General's own interpretation of it—which conflicts with Quebec's—will he now agree to do what Quebec has agreed to do and have public hearings surrounding this issue?

Hon. Mr. Scott: I read the press report that the honourable leader referred to. I should bring to the attention of the House that I have not met or spoken with anybody in the Quebec government at any level since Meech Lake. Consequently, I

am not able to judge what Mr. Remillard thought I had said about the accord and which led him to the conclusion that he advanced. As a result, I am not able to comment on the observations he made.

Mr. Grossman: By way of supplementary, let me try to answer that question. The Premier has said with regard to that clause that the accord "will in some ways strengthen Ottawa's ability to set up new social programs since the agreement formally recognizes the federal government's right to spend on programs in the provincial domain." That is what the Premier said.

Let me tell the Attorney General what the Premier of Quebec said at the open hearings held in Quebec last week. He said, "We are working on a legal text that would ensure a legal mechanism that would not give a constitutional groundwork to federal spending. It is obvious this was not the goal of the agreement in principle."

We now have the Premier of Quebec and the Premier of Ontario categorically disagreeing with each other on the import of that very important clause. Given that disagreement, does the Attorney General not think it is time to have public hearings in Ontario such as they are having in Quebec?

Hon. Mr. Scott: First, I do not see the conflict that the honourable member refers to. The comment made by the Premier of this province is correct. There is no provision in the Constitution of Canada that permits the federal government to expend any funds in areas of exclusive provincial jurisdiction. There is not one word of that in the Constitution.

As a result of the Meech Lake accord, there will be a provision in the Constitution that spells that out; putting an end, by the way, to some pending litigation. That is what the Premier of the province was saying and that is technically correct. There is no question about it.

Mr. Grossman: With respect, there is obviously a great question about it. I will repeat to the Attorney General the words the Premier of Quebec used. He said, quite in contradiction to what the minister just said, "We are working on a legal text that would ensure a legal mechanism that would not give a constitutional groundwork to federal spending."

The Premier of Quebec is totally and completely at odds with the interpretation the Attorney General just gave and his Premier has just given to a very important clause in that agreement. Before the Premier goes back to sign an accord, which the Premier of Quebec now

interprets quite differently from the way the Premier of Ontario interprets it, would the minister not agree that in the name of open democratic government it is now time to have the public hearings in Ontario that the people of Quebec have been entitled to have?

Hon. Mr. Scott: To be frank, I do not read the quotation from the Premier of Quebec with the same intonation as my honourable friend does. The issue that had to be resolved at Meech Lake, and was resolved, was not whether there should be a right in a province to opt out of a federal plan. That was recognized long before Meech Lake. There was no federal plan in provincial jurisdiction that could compel the performance of a province.

What was addressed at Meech Lake was whether there should be compensation for a province that sought to opt out of a federal plan in exclusively provincial jurisdiction. The answer to that, given by those who agreed to the Meech Lake accord, was yes, so that the provinces would be deprived essentially of double taxation, that is their tax funds going to Ottawa to fund a federal program in provincial jurisdiction and local tax funds being used to formulate a plan or an initiative within the province.

That being said, I have to conclude that I do not understand what the Premier of Quebec said in at all the same light as my friend the Leader of the Opposition does.

Mr. Grossman: The Attorney General has once again refused to have public hearings in Ontario. What is he covering up?

1400

URBAN TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Mr. Grossman: My second question, in the absence of the Premier once again and in the anticipated absence of the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton), is for the Treasurer.

The Treasurer will recall that last October we asked for the tabling of all the Urban Transportation Development Corp. documents. On October 28 last, we drew to the attention of the House that the government had refused to table the most important document in the UTDC deal until we demanded it, which was the Via Rail side letter. After we got the Via Rail side letter tabled by the government, it indicated clearly that in the event the proposed purchase by VIA Rail of rolling stock from UTDC fell through, the entire deal would be renegotiated. It is also clear on the face of it that \$190 million now has fallen through.

Mr. Speaker: The question is?

Mr. Grossman: Will the Treasurer today agree that as a result of the Via Rail side letter and his negotiations to sell UTDC, the government of Ontario now is liable for as much as \$190 million on a deal for which it got \$30 million?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The honourable member will recall that the government of Canada reached an agreement, and perhaps we should call it a tentative agreement since the cabinet of the government of Canada now has rejected it, to buy \$190 million worth of rolling stock built by UTDC. They now have decided at the highest level that they will not proceed with that agreement. In the sale of UTDC this contract, which we consider to be a firm contract, was an asset. As I understand the situation as it now is, our contract, at least in part with UTDC, will be to maintain at least a reasonable amount of work in the factories in Thunder Bay and Kingston as associated with that contract. We have a potential liability of \$190 million.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer has just given the information that the Minister of Transportation and Communications and Mr. Kruger, when he was allowed to participate before he was shuffled off somewhere else, refused to give us. Let us hear the Treasurer's answer. He admitted the government is subject now to a \$190-million potential liability.

Let us set this framework properly. All the documents, and we have the copies here, indicate clearly that they did not have all but an agreement; it is quite clear from all the wording used in these documents that both parties to the purchase and sale understood it was quite a tentative agreement with Via Rail. Given all that, can he explain today why he would have negotiated a sale that brought \$30 million in cash and that he admits today brings a potential payout to Lavalin of \$190 million, leaving the taxpayers of Ontario potentially in the hole \$160 million because the government had to dump UTDC and give away those jobs early in its term?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Leader of the Opposition and his colleague the member for Fort William (Mr. Hennessy) are very much pessimists, even Cassandras, when they predict a very negative approach to the market for these rail cars. The only way this liability would ever be called upon, and it is not a liability until the beginning of the next decade, would be if the market for the rolling stock simply were not in existence at all.

We are confident that the quality of the rolling stock built there is going to continue to be in

demand in the world market as well as in the local market. We feel that with the buoyancy of the economy of Canada, and in particular that of Ontario, this liability will be met by contracts placed in these factories, which have established such good reputations for quality workmanship and reasonable prices.

We feel the disposition of UTDC was a good one. We feel it is being well managed. We feel further that this particular commitment about which the government of Ontario received assurances from the government of Canada will be filled by the market I have just described.

[Applause]

Mr. Grossman: Only a Liberal caucus would applaud a loss of \$160 million.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: The Treasurer indicated, consistent with the sloppy way in which this deal was negotiated—

Interjections.

Mr. Grossman: The member's colleagues are getting a little worried about having to explain the loss of \$160 million here.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grossman: The information which the Treasurer offered the House a moment ago perhaps does not coincide entirely with the documentation which we have here. It does not indicate that this liability is something down the road. It indicates that in the event the deal falls through the parties shall negotiate in good faith an appropriate compensation or adjustment by October 15, 1987, or the arbitration provisions kick in.

What we find out here as a result of the sloppiness with which he disposed of UTDC is that by October 15, 1987, an arbitration is going to occur to determine whether the provincial government has to pay out \$190 million to Lavalin—say half of it, \$95 million or whatever. It is going to be in this year that the Treasurer is going to have to find almost \$200 million to pay a company for taking UTDC off its hands.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the Treasurer agree?

Mr. Grossman: My question to the Treasurer—

Mr. Speaker: Do you have a supplementary question or not?

Mr. Grossman: Yes, I do indeed.

Mr. Speaker: I thought you had asked whether the Treasurer agreed with all those statements you made.

Mr. Grossman: No, you did.

Mr. Speaker: Question.

Mr. Grossman: My question to the Treasurer is, would he acknowledge this afternoon that on October 15, 1987, an arbitration could kick in which would require the taxpayers to pay out \$190 million to Lavalin on a deal in which the government got \$30 million?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I cannot acknowledge that. I do not know what the member is reading from. I do know, however, that the government of Canada had made what we consider to be a very wise decision in purchasing rolling stock for Via Rail from the manufacturers in Canada that happen to be located in Ontario. For reasons that are obscure they decided not to buy in Ontario, and this is a serious matter, as the honourable member has pointed out. We sincerely hope their alternative decision to spend \$1 million on renovating each of these rail cars—

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would just like to remind the members that a quarter of the time has gone by with two questions.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Rae: I will ask the question very quickly. My question is to the Minister of Housing.

Mr. Rowe: Hurry up, Bob, hurry up.

Mr. Rae: It sounds better that way.

The minister will know that rent review is in a complete state of shambles as a result of the passage of Bill 51 and the government's lack of preparation. In Mississauga alone there are 4,486 separate applications for rent review. There are three people to hear those applications, which means on average one person is being asked to hear 1,500 applications. There are over 18,000 backdated applications in Ontario. How can the minister explain this complete and utter shambles, and what does he intend to do to protect tenants who are now paying higher rents than they ought to be because of the administrative shambles as a result of Bill 51?

1410

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member, again, has his own strategy of trying to bring in scare tactics to the tenants there. We know the rent review process is working. Sure, there are 18,000 applications; but again, the member is trying to indicate that only one application will be heard per day, and this is not so.

As members know, some of those applications, for instance a single application for a three-bedroom, could be heard within an hour or

two. What the member is trying to indicate is that 18,000 will take years to do. That is not the case. The system is working properly.

Mr. Rae: If this is what happens when things are working, what happens when things are broken? What does the minister say then?

I have a question relating directly to what the minister is saying, because I am sure he will know there are perhaps as many as 40,000 tenants who are in the position of being in post-1975 buildings who received notices of rental increase last October. They are having to pay that increase and basically having to lend that money to the landlord, even if the increase cannot be justified. Many of those tenants are still paying those inflated rates.

Ron Gauthier, of 135 Marlee Avenue in the city of York, for example, had a rent increase of 30 per cent on April 1, 1987. He is going to have to continue to pay this unjustified increase.

My question to the minister is, what is he going to do for all those tenants who are basically making interest-free loans to his friends, the landlords of Ontario?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member raised that question some time ago, and I explained to him that it is an agreement between the landlord and tenant that there are certain cases where tenants will continue paying the increase over and above the guideline because of a certain date on which they had made that application. However, as soon as the case is heard, if the increase is not granted, those increased rents will be paid back to the tenants. That is an agreement between landlords and tenants.

We knew at the start, because of the startup situation, that these situations would happen. For the member to stand up and bring this kind of panic to the tenants is so unfair; he is very irresponsible, as a matter of fact.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: When are the hearings going to be?

Mr. Speaker: Order, the member for Windsor-Riverside (Mr. D. S. Cooke), the Attorney General (Mr. Scott), the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis).

Mr. Reville: The minister is suggesting the New Democrats are trying to put fear into the hearts of the tenants, and yet he knows his bill is resulting in Mr. Gauthier and others paying \$200 a month up front prior to their rents being justified. When I asked him about this situation in February, three months ago, he said: "That will be resolved after March 2. All the hearings will be heard by then."

I want to ask the minister: on what date, and I would like him to specify also the year, will the tenants of Ontario have their rents justified and get the rebates to which they are entitled so that they can do the kind of planning all of us like to do about our housing?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The rent review bill, Bill 51, that has been in place will save the tenants \$20 million in 1987, as I have stated over and over again.

It gets even better. In 1988, it is anticipated that \$40 million will be saved.

The member spoke of 18,000 applications that are being processed. As I explained, 15,000 are in the post-1975 category. Because of the fairness of the bill and the provisions that have been made to have this redressed, everyone is coming forward to have his case heard. Those rent review commissioners are in place and the applications will be heard in due course.

Mr. Rae: Presumably March 2, 1987, has now become in due course.

Mr. Speaker: To which minister?

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr. Rae: My new question is to the Minister of Housing as well. It concerns the fundamental social transformation that has taken place in this province in the past 20 years. The cost of buying a home has doubled from being two and a half times the average annual income to nearly five times the average annual income. It is now far more difficult for the children of working parents to buy homes than it was for their parents. This is a crisis which all of us are aware of as constituency members. We are facing this housing crisis every day in our own constituency offices.

How can the minister justify the failure of this government to move on the question of affordable housing and to deal with the fact that the children in working families today do not have that vision, that dream of having their own home, because that has been taken away from them by governments which have failed to act?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I agree with the honourable leader of the third party that with the cost of housing having been driven up so high, it has shattered many people's dream of owning their own home. I think statistics have shown that the average home in Toronto is about \$225,000. However, I do not agree with the member when he says it is this government that has done the disservice of getting affordable housing away from the people.

I come back again to Bill 51. If we did not have that in place, can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, the escalated rents that one would have to pay. We did take action beyond the dreams of the opposition to realize, to implement such a very progressive bill, to at least give people some place where they could live.

Mr. Speaker, you heard the speech from the throne, to which you listened very attentively, and I am sure members have done so. We talked about our "housing first" policy. This in itself is addressing the affordability problem, where we can use all our resources.

Mr. Rae: I wonder if the minister can explain how it is possible that in the last year, which has seen the most vicious cycle of speculation in this province in memory, certainly in recent memory, the government of Ontario has refused to introduce a tax on speculation in land and why it has failed to take any specific measures that will keep down and keep affordable the price of homes for working parents in Ontario. Why has the government failed to do that and failed to take the one measure that might have made a difference?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I think the honourable member is trying a little approach here, hoping that I may agree on something that we have strongly taken a position on. He heard our Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) state that a speculation tax would not in any way assist us in having affordable housing. If the member wants to talk about speculation, speculation is when we talk about an election. We are quite comfortable in ruling here now, and each day we hear about the speculation. We are saying that we failed to implement the speculation tax because, as the Treasurer has indicated to him, it would not help the situation in the least.

Mr. Reville: Judging from the government's record on rent review, we should probably rename the "housing first" program the "housing in due course" program.

Why is the minister not standing in his place today to say that he will introduce a new home ownership made easy program so that people can recapture the dream of home ownership in this province?

1420

Hon. Mr. Curling: Again, the throne speech indicated the aggressive way we are going to approach the housing situation here. I know how anxious the member is to hear our program. Tomorrow when the budget is being stated, I know he will listen attentively. Flowing from

that will be another aggressive assured housing policy that will address the concern of housing in this province.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: My question is to the Minister of Housing. With respect to these 20,000 applications that are backing up in his field office, can he please advise whether he has mailed out the cost-revenue statements that landlords need to complete? Has he sent those out to those landlords who have made application?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member has raised a concern about the rent revenue statement, and I gather from my staff the statements have been posted out. It was a rather detailed form, and it took some time to get it right. We will not behave in an ad hoc situation as in the past, having some buildings under rent control and some not under rent control; but to get the process in a correct form, the rent review statement took longer than we thought it would. I gather from my staff, and I stand to be corrected, that was posted out.

I also want to comment that I am glad the honourable member is defending Bill 51 today. He is one who did not vote on this, as members can gather.

Mr. Jackson: The minister issued a statement on December 5, and I will quote from his statement:

"The Residential Rent Regulation Act will be phased in over a period of 60 days to ensure an orderly transition from the previous rent review process to the new system. Implementation of the new system will be completed by Monday, February 2, 1987."

That was the minister's statement. He obviously relied on someone's judgement that he would be ready but I can assure him, if he is not aware, that those cost-revenue statements have not been sent out to landlords or tenants for their examination. In fact, his ministry has not even conducted the seminars of instruction for his own field staff. Under the former legislation it was a four-page report. I understand this new cost-revenue statement is more than 20 pages long. He has been reluctant to give the Legislature his time lines.

Mr. Speaker: And the question is?

Mr. Jackson: When is he going to start taking responsibility for this legislation, understand its implications, free up the backlog and give the tenants and the landlords of this province a reasonable time line to follow?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I have a full understanding of this bill and its process. What I do not have is the control of this House. When we put the timetable down, I was convinced that every single member here would co-operate in the way we passed those bills and the detailed way we went about the province in bringing the clauses together, and that the third reading, etc., would go through in an organized manner. Perhaps because of my ignorance of the facts or lack of experience in the House, it took a little time. I hope we get better co-operation in the future so that we can move along in getting the tenants in this province protected.

Mr. Jackson: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker: The minister is accusing us of lack of co-operation. We waited five months for him to get these time lines—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps the honourable member will read the standing orders some time to see the difference between order and privilege.

[Later]

Mr. Jackson: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: Could I correct the record?

Mr. Speaker: Your record?

Mr. Jackson: Yes. My office did check with the Ministry of Housing with respect to the timing of the distribution of the cost-revenue statements. I have learned from the ministry office that it has been sent to the rent review offices but, in fact, it has not been sent to the landlords or the tenants in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is not a point of order. As I understood it, you were correcting your own record.

Mr. Rae: The minister said they were gone.

Mr. Speaker: I asked him if he was correcting his own record.

Mr. Rae: But the minister made a statement that is fundamentally out of keeping with the facts.

Mr. McClellan: It is appropriate for the minister to rise and correct his statement. I am sure he would want to do it.

Mr. Speaker: Order. There is no need for a debate.

Mr. Rae: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would have thought that if a minister is found to have made a material misconstruction of the facts, it would be in keeping with the traditions of this place for the minister to rise in his place and indicate what the truth is with respect to a matter upon which he has made very direct representations in the House.

Mr. Speaker: It is certainly not up to the Speaker to direct anyone.

Does the Minister of Housing wish to speak on that point of order?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The record may show that I said I stand to be corrected.

Interjections.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services, who is aware of the large increases in the welfare rolls in Metropolitan Toronto and probably of recent press, both in the Toronto Star, which made it look like it was very easy to get welfare in Toronto, and in the Toronto Sun, which had a headline, "Jobless Flock to Easy Street."

Is the minister aware that in Metropolitan Toronto now they have changed the rules, as a result of this pressure, in a "get-tough measure", as one administrator put it, to require of employables at least five days of employment search before they will give them any money for housing.

Given that this is the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and knowing the profound problems we have here in Toronto, does the minister agree with that policy and, if he does not, has he made his views known to the city of Toronto or to Metropolitan Toronto?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I was not aware of that change; and no, I do not agree with it.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I am pleased. I hope the minister will convey his feelings to the Metropolitan Toronto council. I should also advise him of another change in their policy, which is to refuse funding to individuals who are appealing to the Social Assistance Review Board for interim assistance. It used to be their policy to give some assistance for housing while that appeal was on. Now they have even taken that away from them. Will the minister please contact them about that as well?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I will do so, but the honourable member will be aware of the fact that SARB has the power to order interim assistance while it is having a hearing. My understanding is that order still stands.

LAND TRANSFER TAX

Hon. Mr. Nixon: On May 14 the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) asked me about the land transfer tax payable by Petrocan on properties purchased from Gulf. He indicated in

his question that I had secret meetings with the chief administrators of Petro-Canada and/or Gulf. I can assure him that there were no meetings at all, secret or otherwise.

He indicated that I had used my ministerial prerogative by regulation or order in council to relieve them of appropriate tax payable. I assure him that no orders nor regulations have done so. He should be aware, and I am sure he is, that the purchase of the assets of Gulf by Petro-Canada was an aggregate purchase. In order for the appropriate taxes to be applied to the properties—and there are 280 of them—the purchase price had to be disaggregated, a word that I have learned in the past few days.

The officials from Petro-Canada visited the Ministry of Revenue because they wanted to know whether they could have an approval for registry of the new title of the land, and in order to do that they have to have the approval of the Ministry of Revenue that the tax is paid or payable.

Under those circumstances the book value that was assigned in the purchase of the property was approved on a pro tem basis under those circumstances, but all of these matters are under audit. I just want to read a comment taken from a letter, signed by Mr. John Nicol on December 30, 1985, who also signed the affidavit that the Leader of the Opposition read to the House. "We also recognize that the certification of the payment to be provided by your office for the purpose of conveyance registration does not constitute acceptance by the Ministry of Revenue of the amount of the land transfer tax liability."

Mr. Speaker: I am just checking the standing orders. It said when a minister was responding, if it was a fairly lengthy response, that it should be done during ministerial statements.

Mr. Gillies: He could have put it in the throne speech.

Mr. Rae: He is new around here. He is just learning. He does not know all the rules.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I was just informing members of the rules and I think I should add a minute to the question period.

1430

Mr. Grossman: The affidavits referred to indicated that this was as a result of meetings held in the minister's office, not public meetings but private meetings held in the minister's office, that it was with the approval of the Minister of Revenue and that it was pursuant to his powers under section 17 of the act; all of which, in those sworn affidavits filed with the court, contradict

the information he offered the House. Let us just get that on the record.

The Treasurer talked about aggregating and disaggregating the numbers. The fact is that his ministry has allowed, on a tentative basis, a payment of tax on book value, not market value. My question to the Minister of Revenue is a simple one. Can he tell us today the difference between the book value and the market value, which he surely must have known before his ministry agreed to that? Why would he agree to allow Petrocan to do what single home owners are not allowed to do, which is to pay on book value, not market value?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Because we followed the procedures used for the past number of years by the honourable member's colleagues, and there are a number of them who have been Minister of Revenue. Let us get back to the affidavit. I can assure the member that there was no meeting in the Minister of Revenue's office or any other office between the Minister of Revenue and the officials of Petrocan or Gulf. Such a meeting did not occur. Does he understand me? It did not occur.

Mr. Grossman: The affidavit clearly says there were secret meetings. We want to know why the Minister of Revenue gave away millions of dollars—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Will the honourable member take his seat.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Will the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grossman) take his seat. New question, the member for Lincoln.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE DISABLED

Mr. Andrewes: My question is to the Minister of Community and Social Services. It is about an issue of which he is quite aware. It is an opportunity for him to respond in a brief but very positive manner. Responding to my leader last week, the minister pledged an increase in funding to all handicapped people in Ontario. Given the excess of almost \$1 billion that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) has in his fold, which he has confirmed, has the minister contacted the Treasurer regarding this public commitment and asked the Treasurer to pass through the guaranteed annual income system for the disabled support to handicapped Ontarians in tomorrow's budget?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In response to the question of the member's leader, I indicated that

money would be shared with all the disabled people in the province. I have already said that.

Mr. Andrewes: Last week, the Leader of the Opposition tabled a letter from the Minister of National Health and Welfare, Jake Epp. That letter clearly allows the Gains-D supplement to be passed through to those handicapped people who so desperately need it. Other provinces have found ways of doing it. Will the minister guarantee today that the Gains-D supplement will be passed through, retroactive to January 1, 1987?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I do not have the authority to indicate a yes answer to that.

COMFORT ALLOWANCES

Mr. R. F. Johnston: My question is for the Minister of Community and Social Services. Can the minister tell us the last time comfort allowances for people in institutions were raised and whether he has recommended any raise in these comfort allowances recently?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I am sure the honourable member realizes that it is the responsibility of ministers to advise the Treasurer on a number of issues. For roughly another 24 hours, I will not be free to answer his question; maybe after that I will be happy to do so.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: As I understand it, it is the Treasurer's prerogative to decide what he will put in a budget but it is not a minister's prerogative not to say whether he has given advice in a particular area. As the minister will know, for a number of years now people in institutions have received comfort allowances. It has been several years since the \$112 given to senior citizens has been increased. For disabled people, the amount is \$77. Did the minister recommend: first that they should be brought to parity; and second, that there should be increases this year?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: I have recommended that the gap be closed and that it be done this year.

NURSING CARE

Mr. Callahan: My question is for the Minister without Portfolio responsible for senior citizens' affairs. About a week and a half ago, I attended at a nursing home in my riding, Tullamore Nursing Home, at the request of the operator and had a discussion with him and his chief nurse. I was advised that because of the number of elderly seniors coming to be placed in that home and because they are living far longer than in the past, many of these people constitute heavy nursing

care. Accordingly, the 1.5 hours required by the Nursing Homes Act are being exceeded. In the absence at the present time of chronic care facilities for these people to be placed in, what steps are being taken by his ministry to review this issue? When can we expect we might hear something in that regard?

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: I thank the member for the question.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Van Horne: I thank the members opposite for their interest in seniors. I know they are very interested in what we are about.

The question the member raises was one of the main points of concern pointed out to me as we travelled about in our consultative process almost two years ago. The old definition of the nursing care requirement for extended care, the hour and a half of nursing care per day, was a requirement that was perhaps fine in 1972 when the previous government brought in this program. At that time, the people who were coming to a nursing home situation were on average approximately 68 years of age. By the last statistics we had, in 1983-84 they were coming in at an average age of about 83, obviously in a much more frail condition requiring a lot more than one and a half hours of nursing care per day.

The question is, how do you properly define heavy care? This is what we are attempting to do through a group of people who represent the various aspects of the industry, along with some representatives from the various ministries. We hope that piece of work will be concluded by the end of this calendar year.

FOREST SPRAYING PROGRAM

Mr. Gillies: My question is for the Minister of Natural Resources. Over the weekend, a spokesman for the ministry indicated that up to 60 per cent of the province's forest spraying program could be cancelled this year because of unacceptable levels of contaminant in the insecticide. Can the minister tell the House whether this is the case, whether any of this insecticide has been used; and if so, what health hazards it presents for the people of this province?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: We had commenced our spraying program with bacillus thuringiensis only. It was found there was some contamination in some of the spray. We immediately stopped the spraying program. Our consultative process with the other ministries that are interested now has suggested that there is no danger, but we are still examining the situation. There will be no spraying until we are absolutely certain it poses

no problem. That is precisely where it is at this point in time. I will be pleased to keep the member advised as to when we might go forward. I am quite optimistic that we will.

Ms. Fish: I am a little amazed there was not a statement on this today. If the minister is saying he is not going to proceed with the Bt at this time, can he tell us what his proposed plans are to deal with the budworm and gypsy moth situation since he has a remaining window of about 10 days?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: I do not think that question should be put by that person who did not care to have any spraying done to protect all the forests of Ontario. She cannot have it both ways. If we want to protect the trees, we have to take the initiative to do it. We have done that as no other government ever has in the history of Ontario. The Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) transferred nearly \$30 million. It is a program that is about five times what their government ever did at its best. The forests of Ontario and jobs for northern Ontarians, and a job in northern Ontario means one in southern Ontario, are being protected as they never have been in the history of this province.

1440

PAY EQUITY

Ms. Gigantes: Although the first instalment on equal pay adjustments for women in the public sector of Ontario will not be necessary under Bill 154 until about May 1989, and heaven only knows who will form the government then, I wonder whether the Treasurer will state as a matter of current government policy that funding for pay equity adjustments in Ontario municipalities, hospitals, children's aid societies and day care centres should be from the provincial tax base rather than from the property tax base.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I cannot make that commitment, attractive though it would be to the municipalities and to those who function under their aegis. I can assure the honourable member, however, that in subsequent budgets, whoever has the responsibility for preparing them, this will obviously be a matter of careful review.

Ms. Gigantes: The Treasurer will have to recognize that it is not only an attractive notion to municipalities, etc., as he suggests, but is also attractive to those people who look upon this as a question of fairness. The property tax system is much less reflective of progressive tax policy, and the Treasurer understands this, than is the provincial tax system. When we undertake a

major social reform such as this one, why should we not use the most equitable source of funding for that reform?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The member as usual makes a good deal of sense, particularly from her own point of view. Her party is committed to abolishing property taxes and our party is not quite that progressive at this time. We still consider that an important part of the tax mix. Seriously, since the initiative for pay equity has arisen in this Legislature, as the burden of this in dollars comes on it will mean that the Treasurer, whoever he or she may be in the future, will certainly have to consider the position taken by the member.

SMALL CLAIMS COURT

Mr. Ferraro: I have one quick question for the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Take your time.

Mr. Ferraro: I would take my time but July 2 is approaching quickly.

The question I have pertains to small claims court limits. I have received a number of complaints recently, as I am sure other members of the House have, about the fact that an inequity exists in Ontario, the inequity specifically being that the limit in Toronto for small claims court is \$3,000 and outside of Toronto it is \$1,000. Why does this inequity exist? When, if ever, will this be standardized throughout the province?

Hon. Mr. Scott: As the honourable member knows, the judges of the provincial court, civil division, are located only in the Toronto area, extending to Hamilton and St. Catharines. There are no judges of that court anywhere else in Ontario because the previous government did not appoint any.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I just knew that would get a rise.

The reality is that the proposed change the member refers to is a sensible and important one. I have had a number of inquiries from members about it in their areas. There are two ways to deal with it. The first is to persuade the district court judges in their home towns who can hear those cases up to \$3,000, if they want to, to do so. They are perfectly entitled to do so. They always did when I began to practise but I gather they are busier on other matters now. The other method is to appoint an entirely new provincial court civil bench all across Ontario. That would be a very expensive endeavour and I have not been able to obtain funds for that in the current year.

TECHNOLOGY CENTRES

Mr. Cousens: I have a skill-testing question for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology. In the light of his government's commitment to "improving our overall competitive position" in business and technology, can he list the six Ontario technology centres and briefly tell this House what his plans are for each of these tech centres?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: As the member is aware, there was a review that went on of all the technology centres across the province. That review is ongoing. They have been given a further life of approximately two years in which to submit new business plans that we are reviewing and will be asking some questions about. They have also been asked to cut back a bit on some of their expenses and to be more self-supporting.

Mr. Partington: The government is proceeding with the privatization of the Ontario Centre for Automotive Parts Technology in St. Catharines, despite recommendations that its mandate be extended two further years. Will the minister agree to extend the mandate of this centre past December 1988 or guarantee continued service to those companies using OCAPT and guarantee the jobs of the skilled workers at the auto tech centre?

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: We have been very pleased with the job the auto tech centre has been doing. We figure there are some improvements that can be made. We of course have talked about privatization, but no final decision has been made. That is certainly one of the things we are considering.

Interjections.

MULTICULTURALISM

Mr. Grande: If the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) will listen, he will be interested.

My question is for the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. Given the fact that since October 1985 the minister and the Minister without Portfolio responsible for citizenship and culture (Mr. Ruprecht) have gone around this province talking with every ethnic group possible in every major city and noncity in Ontario, and given the fact that last year in October she presented to the cabinet Multiculturalism: A New Strategy for Ontario, a new policy paper, a new policy position, can the minister explain to us whether her cabinet colleagues said no to her draft policy or whether they said to her, "Yes, but keep it

secret so you can announce it at the start of an election campaign"?

Hon. Ms. Munro: As announced in the throne speech, this government gave very clear signals that it was committed to taking a look at new strategies in multiculturalism and that the members would see indications of such a policy which could be observed and measured as the months proceeded. This is a very strong indication and the member can certainly wait for the announcements as they proceed. This minister and this government are completely committed to multiculturalism in whatever way the member chooses to define it or whatever way we come out with it as a policy and a program.

Mr. Grande: The minister has answered the question: they will keep the policy until the election call. In other words, they have certainly learned well from the Tories to keep it secret and make an announcement before an election, call the ethnic press together and make a big do about it.

Can the minister tell us, since people across this province now have been waiting two years for this multicultural policy—she announced it back in October—and since the minister was good enough to leak it to the press in January of this year and since she said she would officially announce a policy some time in March, where is it? Why is it taking her such a long time?

1450

Hon. Ms. Munro: The honourable member would be delighted to know that I learned nothing at all from the official opposition on the multicultural policy because it did nothing other than elucidate principles for so many years.

Second, this government does not intend to stand on the backs of ethnics nor to use any of the member's supposed jargon to be a reason for an election campaign. I have indicated to him that this government announced in the throne speech its intention and that the programs and policies will follow in due course. That is my statement. If he chooses to take issue with it, that is fine. If he chooses to take issue with the government, that is fine.

It is not going to be announced just before the election, I can assure him of that.

ONTARIO BASIC SKILLS PROGRAM

Mr. McLean: My question is for the Minister of Skills Development. As he knows, many people are taking advantage of the ministry's basic skills upgrading program in 22 community colleges in Ontario. The ministry's brochure featuring the program states it is individual and

flexible, but lasts no more than 16 weeks. I met with 30 students last Friday in my Orillia office. They are worried they will not be able to complete their allotted program in 16 weeks.

Will the minister clarify if students will be permitted to continue the program for as long as it takes them to improve their skills, or will they be cut off after 16 weeks?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: My friend is referring to the Ontario basic skills program which is part of Ontario's Training Strategy, and as he says the program lasts 16 weeks. I am not sure why individuals from his riding who are taking advantage of the program cannot complete the program within 16 weeks. The programs are designed to fit into that time period. If he gives me more information about the particular problems those constituents are experiencing, I will look into it and get back to him.

Mr. McLean: The students indicate to me that 16 weeks is not long enough. The previous program, the technical upgrading program, was up to 52 weeks. There is a federal program at this time, basic training for skill development, which is up to 52 weeks; 32 weeks for grades 11 and 12.

These students cannot continue to get their upgrading in the short period of time. It is indicated in the brochure that it is flexible and can be longer. Will the minister tell the House today that he will extend it if necessary?

Hon. Mr. Sorbara: I just told my friend I will look into it and determine whether there is a particular problem where Ontario Basic Skills is being offered in his riding. There are a number of programs available in the province, whether through the federal government or privately, to enhance the basic skills capacity of the people.

In our analysis, it was deemed appropriate to create a program of 16 weeks as being a program that would be sufficiently long to give individuals the basic skills they need to enter the work force, oftentimes coming back after bearing children or being out of the work force for some other reason.

I told my friend I would look into it and determine whether there is a problem in his area, and I will do that.

LANDFILL SITE

Mr. Charlton: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment, if he can return to his seat. The minister is aware that the Upper Ottawa Street landfill site study was completed about a year ago and turned over to the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) by the site study committee. That study was tabled in this House

last fall and the citizens were basically given three months to look at the study and respond in terms of their feelings on the recommendations and whether they were satisfactory.

Can the minister tell us when his ministry will be responding in terms of the specific recommendations in the study for remedial work on that site to improve its safety, and specifically whether he is now prepared to proceed with a gas collection and flaring system or some other appropriate technology to stop the gas emanating from the site?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member asks an appropriate question and he has had a long-term interest in that particular question. I can assure the member that we have an interministerial committee looking at it. He appropriately points out—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I am trying to give him an answer, but the leader of the third party is interrupting this good answer that the member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Charlton) will enjoy and find useful.

We have an interministerial committee involving the Ministry of Health. Perhaps the Ministry of Labour has some interest as well, in terms of the occupational health and safety end of things. That will please the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel). I expect that in the relatively near future we will have a response.

I think what the member wants is a specific response to the concerns that were identified by the citizens and by the so-called experts who did the report. As soon as I get that information, I will be pleased to share it with the members.

PETITIONS

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: Ontario certainly is a place to stand.

I wish to table a petition addressed to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. It reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

It is signed by 111 persons, bringing the total now to 1,905 and more to come.

TEST FLIGHTS

Mr. Wildman: I wish to table a petition:

"To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, and in particular the Honourable James Bradley, Minister of the Environment:

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the Legislature of Ontario as follows:

"We are against the low-level flights of B-52 jet bombers and F-111 jet fighters. We petition the Ontario government to stop these flights at once."

There is a second petition with an additional eight names.

FUEL SAFETY

Mr. Reville: I have a petition signed by 33 constituents which notes that the fuels safety branch of the Ontario government has closed Toronto Taxi's propane station at 1030 Danforth Avenue. The petition says:

"Protect our safety; keep the Toronto Taxi propane station closed until the report is received from the committee on the siting of alternate transportation fuels outlets."

1500

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

Mr. D. R. Cooke from the standing committee on finance and economic affairs presented the following report and moved its adoption:

Your committee begs to report the following bill as amended:

Bill 116, An Act to revise the Loan and Trust Corporations Act.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

CHILDREN'S LAW REFORM AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Scott moved first reading of Bill 60, An Act to amend the Children's Law Reform Act.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the motion carry?

An hon. member: No.

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour say "aye."

All those opposed say "nay."

In my opinion the ayes have it.

Motion agreed to.

Hon. Mr. Scott: I referred to this in an opening statement today. I have nothing further to add at this time.

DRUGLESS PRACTITIONERS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Shymko moved first reading of Bill 61, An Act to amend the Drugless Practitioners Act.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Shymko: I have a brief explanation. The purpose of the bill is to ensure that naturopaths and their profession are covered by the Drugless Practitioners Act.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CITY OF TORONTO ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 5:

That, at the request of the applicant and on the recommendation of the standing committee on the Legislative Assembly, standing order 76(e) be waived with respect to Bill Pr8, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

THIRD READING

The following bill was given third reading on motion:

Bill 52, An Act to amend the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Mr. Pierce: May I speak very briefly on third reading of Bill 52?

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry; it actually has passed.

Mr. Pierce: All right.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: My good friends in the official opposition indicated that orders 5 and 6 are not convenient at this time, and I am informing you, Mr. Speaker, that my colleague the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grand-maitre), who was expected to be here, has been unavoidably delayed.

Mr. Breagh: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: I do not think it would complicate matters unnecessarily if the government House leader were to move the two bills in question. I think we are generally in agreement with him, and I am not anticipating that there would be either a long debate or a division on those two bills. I would agree to having the government House leader move those two bills, if that is acceptable.

Mr. Harris: That may be very well for some member of the New Democratic Party, but as the House leader indicated, he concurred that this might be more timely after the budget and that is what was agreed to by all three House leaders.

Interjection.

Mr. Harris: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Order 6? Order 13?

Mr. Harris: We are prepared to proceed with those.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just so that all three parties are suitably implicated, the NDP indicated it did not want to proceed with government notice of motion 4, having previously agreed to it. The Progressive Conservative Party felt it did not want to proceed with orders 5 and 6, having previously agreed to it. Then I just told the House that it is not convenient to go with orders 13 and 16, because the minister is delayed.

I appreciate very much the thoughtful suggestion by the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) that we might proceed with the bills, and I would be glad to do so. Although I am not what one would call the definitive authority on these bills, I have some passing knowledge of their implication.

Mr. Harris: We had not agreed to anything previously. We had agreed to take them to our caucus today to see how long they would take.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: No, no. That was orders 5 and 6.

Mr. Harris: That is right, but the Treasurer wanted to throw that back into the mix in his discussion on this.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: No. I just wanted that implication that all three parties were slightly off base. I think the honourable member might accept that.

Mr. Harris: No, I do not.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Some time ago, I called orders of the day. I just wonder whether there is any order that should be called now.

INTERIM SUPPLY

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved resolution 1:

That the Treasurer of Ontario be authorized to pay the salaries of the civil servants and other necessary payments pending the voting of supply for the period commencing June 1, 1987, and ending June 30, 1987, such payments to be charged to the proper appropriation following the voting of supply.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This is the standard interim supply motion. The honourable members are aware that the authority of the spending power of the government approved by the Legislature with the supply bills some months ago ran out at the end of the fiscal year. Although the Legislature has been in session since April 28, we still have

not had an opportunity either to consider the spending program of the government or to discuss interim supply.

This particular motion will give the government the approval to pay the appropriate expenditures for the salaries and other necessary payments, pending the voting of supply eventually, to the end of June 1987. The warrants of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor have approved the allocation of public expenditure in the amount of approximately \$7 billion up until now, and I ask that the honourable members expeditiously give me their approval for this interim supply.

Perhaps you would consider it in order, Mr. Speaker, if I indicated that the House leaders, in a more amicable frame of mind, some days ago decided that we might continue with debate on any bills, motions or resolutions that we could possibly bring forward, including this one, until 4:15 this afternoon, at which time we would resume the throne speech debate with the windup speakers, who by agreement would be equally allocated the time remaining until the vote is held at 5:45 p.m., at which time it will then become known publicly where the NDP stands on the principal issues of the day.

Mr. McClellan: As the Treasurer said, we were expecting to do legislation this afternoon. I know the government is eager and anxious to begin the legislative program of this parliament, and the opposition parties, as always, have indicated that they too are willing to make whatever arrangements are necessary to facilitate the government's legislative program. Unfortunately, the minister seems to have gone AWOL and we are unable to begin these important bills. We are ready to discuss interim supply. I gather there is some urgency attached to debate and passage of Bill 6 and Bill 12. I was going to suggest that if the minister does find his way to the chamber, we could adjourn the debate on interim supply and return to the sixth and 13th orders and deal with the legislation, as we had scheduled.

Even as I stand here, the minister has assumed his chair.

Mr. Laughren: He slunk in.

Mr. McClellan: He slunk in.

1510

Mr. Gillies: If it is the wish of the government House leader to discuss interim supply, we would be pleased to do so at whatever length may be determined to be appropriate, but I concur

with the observations made by my friend the House leader of the third party.

The government has been cranking up the pre-election machinery of late about the unwillingness of the opposition parties to make this place function, but at the first opportunity it has to bring forward legislation it is clearly unable to get its act together. We see the minister is here now. We are eager to discuss those bills and we concur with the suggestion that the interim supply motion be adjourned for the moment.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Sometimes this place is a little hard to take. I just want to point out in the few moments I have in this connection that the House leaders agreed to deal with a motion establishing standing orders as the first item this afternoon. At the behest of the New Democratic Party, I agreed to stand that down, since there seemed to be a slight difference of opinion within the New Democratic Party as to how to proceed and we wanted to accommodate our good friends and supporters in the democratic socialist movement.

The second orders of business were to deal with health bills that had been discussed in committee; these would include Bill 176, An Act to amend the Nursing Homes Act, and Bill 177, An Act to amend the Health Facilities Special Orders Act, 1983. For this reason, the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) was in his place, ready to take part in the discussion. Much to my surprise, I was informed by the House leader of the Progressive Conservative Party that some of his colleagues were somewhat reluctant to proceed until after the budget, which, as members know, was unnecessarily delayed a full week.

I do not think it is surprising that our mutual friend the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître), in coming to the House based on the Orders and Notices that had been approved among the House leaders showing their usual perspicacity and goodwill, came at the appropriate time only to find that everything else had fallen into a little pile of ashes and that, in fact, we were dealing with interim supply on more than an interim basis.

Having made that clear and being the last speaker in that regard, I would like to move the adjournment of the debate.

On motion by Hon. Mr. Nixon, the debate was adjourned.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALDIMAND-NORFOLK AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 6, An Act to amend the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk Act.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: This legislation implements the request of the council of the region of Haldimand-Norfolk to introduce a new system of sharing regional and school board costs and brings all properties in the region to a uniform assessment base.

Actuellement, dans la région, 77 pour cent de l'impôt foncier prélevé est déterminé en fonction des besoins des régions et des conseils scolaires. La répartition des impôts fonciers n'est pas équitable pour les contribuables qui relèvent de la même compétence régionale et du même conseil scolaire.

This legislation will permit the implementation of cost-sharing arrangements that will allow the regional municipality and each school board to establish one mill rate for residential purposes and one mill rate for commercial purposes, to be applied uniformly throughout their jurisdiction and the region. Councillors, trustees and ratepayers alike will be able to understand and compare property taxes among properties.

Il est donc essentiel, qu'au moins tous les quatre ans, le Ministère du Revenu réalise une mise-à-jour de l'évaluation foncière afin de refléter, dans l'évaluation, l'évolution de la valeur marchande.

This change, combined with the proposal contained in Bill 12 for county areas, represents a major step forward to improve the property tax system in Ontario.

Mr. Breagh: We appreciate that it is terribly difficult to get the limousines through the downtown Toronto traffic these days and that service in some of those pricey restaurants really is very slow, but we are glad that the minister made his way into the chamber this afternoon.

We will support Bill 6. It is not exactly with great enthusiasm, but it is out of respect for two things. First, it is a request of the municipal council. Rightly or wrongly, councils are duly elected to make these kinds of decisions. I am not a fan of this particular process but there is a second question that does have to be addressed. That is, in many of our municipalities there is a wide variety of assessment techniques that are used. Some rather startling inequities are at work there. This is one way to resolve those. It is not the first time that it has been done, and I suppose it will not be the last.

We will support it on the basis that it has been asked for in the generally agreed upon way by the municipality. It does move to rectify a problem which is actually quite severe in many municipalities. I do not think it is the ultimate solution. I support it with some reluctance, and mostly out

of a feeling that when the Association of Municipalities of Ontario deals with matters such as this, the provincial Legislature should pay some attention to it. So we support it with a bit of reluctance, but we do support it.

Mr. Partington: I too, on behalf of my party, would like to express support for this bill for two reasons. First, I think it is important that we strive to have fairness in the tax system, and it is my belief that the passage of this bill will go some distance towards achieving that goal in the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk. Second, as the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) has stated, this bill has been requested by the municipality, and I am sure it is done with that intent of fairness in taxation.

Clearly, that does not solve the problem of the continuing growth of burdensome property tax, but it is hoped that it will be more properly and more equally distributed among the taxpaying citizens of Haldimand-Norfolk. I believe it is a step in the right direction.

The Deputy Speaker: Does the member for Nipissing wish to enter into the debate?

Mr. Harris: Mr. Speaker, I apologize. I have just walked in. I did not realize the debate was going quite as quickly as it has been. Is this the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk Act?

Some hon. members: Yes.

Mr. Harris: It has been a long day. I started out by getting up at five o'clock this morning to drive down, so I could check out all the gas prices on my way to Toronto; therefore, I ask the indulgence of the Legislature. Members would understand my concern, as I saw price after price that was eight, 10, 12, 50 or 60 cents lower. The big mistake I made was to fill up in my home town of North Bay before I drove past all these cheap gas stations.

I will be very brief. However, I am not sure if there has been put on the record the grave concerns that have been expressed by those in—is it Norfolk?

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: Order. Perhaps the member would address his comments to the chair. The chair can assist him.

1520

Mr. Harris: I know there are a number of people who have been concerned with this bill and that it will in fact lead to higher taxes. I know a number of farmers have been in to see us in our caucus, and we have met with them. I think it ought to be put on the record, particularly today

before the budget comes down tomorrow, that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) in his budgetary estimates for the province may want to look at some way of making this a little easier on our farmers who will be affected negatively by this legislation. I know there are some who will be affected positively, but as we know, the farmers anywhere in our province are not finding things very easy these days. I hope the Treasurer may reflect on that.

Mr. G. I. Miller: I would like to speak briefly on Bill 6, just to straighten out for some of the members in the province where Haldimand-Norfolk exists. It takes in six municipalities: the township of Norfolk, the township of Delhi, the town of Simcoe, the city of Nanticoke, the town of Haldimand and the town of Dunnville.

Some concern has been expressed by the ratepayers in the region. It was requested by the region that Bill 6 be brought in so that we would have fair taxation. There has been a tremendous amount of pressure applied to the agricultural industry, as the member just indicated, and it is the opportune time to make some adjustments so that there is some fairness. I believe there has been some indication that some of the adjustments will be taken care of by the province and, hopefully, will soften the blow.

We did have a group which I know visited all caucuses within the Legislature with concerns about increases in the tax bill. I share those concerns. As one taxpayer, I know my own taxes are going to go up considerably, but again I hope that it is on a fair basis, and that when everything is put in place the increase will be acceptable and those adjustments will be fair. All we can ask for is fairness. Nobody likes to pay taxes, but if it is done on a fair and reasonable basis, it will be acceptable.

There were a couple of issues that they expressed to us, and one was the rate that was established on rural residential versus urban residential. It was at 10.3 and the urban residential was 7.4. This appears to tax rural residential higher than urban areas, which to me seems unfair when rural residential people have to provide all their services. I hope that the minister can look at that.

The other one was in connection with agricultural lands in areas of up to 20 or 50 acres that are not producing the required amount of \$8,000 production to qualify for the agricultural tax reduction. These seem to come under a different category and, consequently, the home owners have projected that it is going to cost them more

money and that they will not be eligible for the farm tax rebate.

I would like to put those two concerns on the record. Again, we hope that it comes out to be fair taxation.

The last concern—and it was expressed—is that the tax will be going up 100 per cent or better. That is an extremely high increase, whenever it takes place. I do not know whether there is anything within the legislation that requires that it can be increased only by a certain percentage. I do not know whether that can be explained by the minister, but those are the concerns that were expressed to us.

Again, I hope Bill 6 does the job it is intended to do: fair taxation to everyone. That should be a reasonable solution.

Mr. Gregory: I have just a very few words on this bill. On first blush, I really have to speak in favour of it. It was always my contention, when I had the honour of serving as Minister of Revenue and was in charge of the reassessment program, that the market value assessment program was an excellent one and that the only fault with it was that it did not go far enough. It was always my hope, had I survived in that ministry a little longer, to have instituted regional market value assessment. I felt it was very necessary.

I think one outstanding example of the need for regional market value assessment is in the Metropolitan Toronto area. It has caused a great deal of anguish and heartache on the part of people because of delays on this item.

To my mind, it is the ultimate in fairness to have everybody in a region assessed on the same basis. It is totally unfair if assessment is done on a hotchpotch basis, municipality by municipality. Yet when one has a central body, such as a region, then the municipalities are not necessarily paying their fair share, because of the assessment base. Such is the case in the Metropolitan Toronto area at present.

That is a big one. We are talking about a smaller deal here, but nevertheless, the theory is the same. No doubt there are some areas or municipalities within the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk which are paying either too much or too little towards regional costs. Many people have great fears about this, because they say, and I think the member for Haldimand-Norfolk said, that in some cases the taxes go up as much as 100 per cent.

Basically, one cannot argue that. Some taxes will go up substantially, but the truth of the matter is that the reason they have to go up substantially is that they were not paying enough

before. What we have is a levelling out. If some people's taxes are going to go up 100 per cent, then some people's taxes are going to go down a substantial amount as well.

That is borne out in many of the studies we have done on tax reform. The newspapers come out and trumpet that there is going to be 43 per cent of the people whose taxes are going to go up, but they do not say very much about the balance, the other 57 per cent, whose taxes are going to go down. They barely mention it in passing. All the thrust seems to be on those people whose taxes go up; if they do go up, it is obvious they have not been paying enough in the past.

One thing has to be said: If we are going to rely on the assessment basis and property taxes—if we are not going to go towards the position the New Democratic Party tends to favour, that of an income tax scheme, because it is possibly a little fairer, maybe it is more even distribution to those who can afford to pay more, and that is fine; but we do not have to be going that way, we are going on the basis of property taxation—if we are going to depend on property taxation, then surely we have to do it in the fairest way possible. Since we do not have too many other yardsticks to use, then we have to depend on market value; in other words, what a willing seller will receive for his property from a willing buyer. Even that is discounted. It is adjusted down to make sure there is no more money in taxation coming into the region or the municipality than there was before. So it is not a money grab, it is not a tax grab in any way; it is a way of levelling out so that everybody is paying his fair share.

I commend the minister for taking this action. I hope we will—and it hurts me to say I admire the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Grandmaître) for it, but I do. It is something I certainly would want to see happen were I in that position.

1530

In my own municipality, Mississauga has gone through the tax reform recently. The last time prior to that was 1969. Recently, they have done a market value study. They have adopted it, it has been applied and there has been a lot of unhappiness.

Particularly in the riding represented by my colleague the member for Mississauga South (Mrs. Marland), there has been a lot of unhappiness in certain segments. It is from people who have had big homes. They were fairly new homes and they were not properly assessed; they could not be properly assessed under the old system. Consequently, they were paying too little tax relative to the value of their property. Of course,

one is going to get some unhappiness from them that their taxes are going up.

But a corresponding number of people are enjoying tax reductions, and rightly so. They can make a very strong point that they have been paying too much tax all the way along. What we have to be afraid of is that some of these people may start taking legal action, even if it is not worth a darn, to try and recover some of the tax they calculate they have overpaid over the years. That is one of the things one has to be concerned about.

I would hope, and I know it is beyond possibility or beyond the scope of anybody's imagination in this House, that we could eventually have the entire province on a market value system on the whole, rather than hotch-potch, rather than even region by region or municipality by municipality, that the whole of Ontario could be assessed on the same basis.

It is a monumental task and it is going to be many years before it can be accomplished. But we have to think in terms of that, that the only truly fair way to do it is to have all Ontario done that way. The procedure we have used up to now has been—

Mr. Martel: That was the campaign promise in 1967, tax equity.

Mr. Gregory: Well, I hope the—

The Deputy Speaker: Order. The member for Mississauga East might address his comments to the chair and then the interjections likely will not distract him.

Mr. Gregory: A criticism from my good friend the member for Sudbury East (Mr. Martel) took me by surprise because he is normally not critical of me. I could not understand why he would be doing this. Normally, we are the best of friends.

Mr. Martel: That was the big 1967 promise, and we are still trying to sort it out.

Mr. Gregory: I want to thank the member for pointing out that the last intention to do this was in 1967. That is marvellous; I am delighted to learn that. That is something I did not know, nor did I care.

Mr. Breugh: You used to introduce a bill every year putting it off for another year.

Mr. Gregory: The fact of the matter is that there is a bill every year, as we well know and the minister knows. A bill has to go through because if it does not, everything reverts. Either that or we suddenly declare the whole of Ontario on a market value system relative to every other community, and we cannot do it.

It might be a good idea. If we can train assessors very quickly, it might be a good employment scheme, because surely we could give 100,000 people a job reassessing every property in Ontario relative to every other property. Marvellous; maybe the unemployment problem would be solved if we did that, but I do not think it is practical. Even though the government now has all the extra money in the world to spend and could afford to do it, it is not likely going to do that. It has other schemes in mind for us.

Back to what I was talking about. Notwithstanding what the member for Sudbury East has said—I point out very quickly that I was not a member in 1967 so I cannot verify what he said—I still feel that the ultimate is to have it done that way, on an across-Ontario basis.

The method that has been used is an excellent one, which was instituted by my good friend and former colleague who used to be the member for Parry Sound, Lorne Maeck. As the then Minister of Revenue, he brought in under section 83 the right to bring in or do market value studies at the option of the municipalities. In other words, they had to request them, which was good and has worked well. I am sure the minister, along with the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon), knows it has worked extremely well. I do not know what the percentage is now, but I believe something like 75 per cent of the municipalities are under market value assessment. Something right has to have been happening.

I think it will continue, and this particular bill is a natural progression from that tactic. Therefore I welcome it and hope this is going to be the way of the future, that by taking region by region we will eventually reach that point where everybody's assessment can be assumed to be fair because it has been appraised relative to every other property in Ontario.

With the use of computers, this is a lot easier thing to do than it would have been back in 1967, 20 years ago, which my friend was talking about. Through the Ministry of Revenue, efficient as it is and with the programs it has on computers, this could well happen, maybe in our lifetime, but not necessarily in our political lifetime; maybe the minister's lifetime, but not mine. At any rate, it is certainly worthy of proceeding.

I did not take the trouble when I began to speak, because we did not have a great consultation—am I supposed to be in favour of this?

Mr. Breugh: You are in favour.

Mr. Gregory: Whether I am supposed to be or not, I certainly am in favour of it and advise the minister to proceed on this with all haste.

Having said that, the minister is going to get an awful lot of opposition to it, from the particular region and the different municipalities in it, from those whose taxes are going to go up. He is going to get an awful lot of complaints, and I think he is worthy of handling them. I think it is marvellous that this minister is going to get a few complaints for a change; he has not had his share.

He will be hearing from the people saying, "You are gouging us;" people who misunderstand and say it is a government money grab. They are going to say all those nice things to the minister that they used to say to me. The then opposition party used to help people say them. They used to encourage these people and try to get meetings together to "get that fellow Gregory who is trying to impose this nasty thing on us."

I can tell the minister that I will not be playing a part in that. I guess that is the nice part of having been through a ministry and having seen the reasons for these things happening. I certainly will not be opposing him or trying to get meetings together to try to oppose him in this, particularly in Haldimand-Norfolk. I might do so in the region of Peel, but not here.

At any rate, the minister is going to have his hands full. It is not going to go smoothly. In my experience, it did not matter which municipality we were talking about that was doing a study for market value assessment. Even though the local councils make the decision to ask for the study, even though the local councils make the decision to proceed after having seen the study, the action of municipal councils afterwards, when it hits the fan, is to say, "The provincial government has done this to us."

Naturally, they are going to do that and they will continue to do that. It does not matter how small the village or the community is, it will put together massive demonstrations to tell the minister how wrong he is to have done this. He is going to stand up there like a man and take it and admit that he is doing it because it is the right thing to do.

He might not believe it for one minute at the time, but he will still do it, and it is the right thing to do. Anybody who gives it any serious thought knows you cannot make an omelette without breaking a few eggs. When the minister gets into market value reassessment, in other words, reform, he is going to break a few eggs and a few people are going to be told their taxes are going up.

The minister will hear stories that it affects those who can least afford it. That is not necessarily the case, but that is the story he will get. He will get it from the newspapers and the great editorial writers who, we know, are so unbiased in their opinions. We see it every day, but they will come down hard on this great unfair money grab on the part of the ministry.

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I am looking forward with great interest to see what the minister's reaction is when this starts. It is going to be the test of his mettle when that happens, because he will get it, as I got it as a minister and as a member, from the municipality.

I suppose the way I have been talking, it sounds as if I am a complete devotee of the system of market value assessment. Surely it is the best we have available to us at present. It is the best system we know of. I do not think that we can rest on that and say that since it is the best system, we need not look any further. As representatives of the people, we have to put our minds to this particular problem and say, "Is there a better way?"

I do not happen to have any idea of anything better at the moment, but we do have to put our minds to that, to see if there is a more fair way of collecting tax from the people that is, let us say, totally errorproof. That is a pretty big order because nothing is errorproof, not even income tax. Certainly, there are ways around paying income tax, as we all know, and I hope our federal government is going to make some corrections there.

I cannot envisage in my mind any fairer system than the market value system. It is working very well where it has been brought in, after the initial two-year period, sort of a testing period. However, if it is brought in and then reviewed every four years, as is supposed to be done, in the second review the problem should not be as great, to my mind.

It is a case of diminishing reaction. In the second review, there will probably be some people who will be uptight, but they will be fewer in number than in the first review. The first review hits roughly a third of the people hard, it benefits a third of the people and a third of the people stay neutral; in other words, there is not much change, a dollar or two here or there.

The government always hears from the people whose taxes are going up, but rarely does it hear from the people whose taxes are going down. Maybe that is because they do not want to rock the boat. They figure if they rock the boat, then

we will change our minds and not do it; and there is a fair amount of money involved.

I guess the government would hear from them if it suddenly made the threat that it was not going to go through with it. Then the government also might be slapped with a lawsuit for not having done so, because they say, "We have been overpaying taxes for years and we are going to see what we can do in the courts about getting some of this money back."

These are some of the trials and tribulations we have to go through in this particular job. I cannot think of any one thing that has caused more—I was going to say heartache, but that would be rather melodramatic—trouble in ridings than property taxation. That is because it hits people right where they live, to coin a phrase. It hits them very close to home. They are probably more aware of that tax than they are of any other tax.

When you pay income tax, usually it is withdrawn from your paycheque and, sure, you can look and say, "Gee, that is a lot of money," but collectively you do not appreciate the amount of it the same way you do with property tax, when you get that bill from the municipality and it says, "You owe \$2,542 this year." People are very aware of that.

They are also aware of the fact that when market value assessment jacks it up to \$3,500 instead of \$2,500, that represents a 40 per cent increase. They are very aware of it and are going to hit the government with it, even with the elaborate appeal system that the government has. That is totally fair too, because in most cases where people have a legitimate complaint about the way the assessment is done, it is very quickly adjusted by the excellent staff in the Ministry of Revenue.

I have never really understood why the Minister of Municipal Affairs carries this legislation regarding market value assessment. It is beyond me. The whole job is done by the Minister of Revenue (Mr. Nixon) and his very capable staff, yet along comes an act dealing primarily with market value assessment and it is the Minister of Municipal Affairs who deals with it. I have never fully understood that, but I never did when I was the minister either. In other words, we do the work but we do not get our name on the bill.

However it is done and whoever handles it, the fact of the matter is that the work is done by the Minister of Revenue and the very capable assistant deputy minister, Jack Lettner. I know, having dealt with him, that this will be done

entirely fairly. Everybody will get a fair deal on it. Some will not think they did, but they will.

Having said that, I do hope, now that the Treasurer is back—I know how anxious he is to proceed with the regional market value study on Metropolitan Toronto. I know he is anxious to do that; I wonder why there is a delay. It really has nothing to do with Haldimand-Norfolk, except that we are doing to Haldimand-Norfolk precisely what we seem to be afraid to do to Metropolitan Toronto.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Is the member recommending that we do it?

Mr. Gregory: Are we recommending that? The Treasurer has said that we recommend that he do it. He well knows that the Treasurer or the Minister of Municipal Affairs does not do it; the council decides whether it is to be done. He knows that. The only responsibility the Minister of Revenue has is to make sure they have the figures to enable them to make that decision. I do not know whether they have those figures up until now. I have to assume that they are now available to the municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. If they are, the municipality is undoubtedly going to make the right decision somewhere along the line.

This is probably unfair to say, but I have the feeling that the Treasurer would rather they did not make the decision until after the impending election. I guess the Treasurer was not listening to me when I said that. I did not get any reaction, so he obviously was not listening. I was just suggesting to him that I cannot help this germ of a suspicion that goes across my mind every once in a while that he might be doing his very best to delay the Metropolitan Toronto thing until after the election. I assume that is not right. Right?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is almost after the election now.

Mr. Gregory: Almost; only a few weeks to go. So that means that perhaps in about seven or eight weeks from now, the implementation of market value assessment in Metropolitan Toronto will be a reality. Is that fair?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: No.

Mr. Gregory: That is not fair. It may not be fair but it looks pretty obvious.

At any rate, back to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I must admit that I have never been able to read the legalese in these bills and must rely on the explanatory notes, but having read the explanatory notes in some detail, I cannot find anything that I object to in the bill. I am not the critic. I am just giving a few viewpoints from my standpoint.

I think it is very important that the last sentence in the explanatory notes be adhered to, that is, that there be an update of the uniform assessment base at least every four years. That is so important. I think it is a total waste of time if we do a market value study, a reassessment on the market value base, and then forget about it, because 10 or 15 years from now, everything will be back in the mess it happens to be in.

This is particularly so in the regions, because this involves transfer payments from regions to the regional government. If that gets out of whack, particularly if one region suddenly puts on a splurge and has all kinds of industrial development, and the market value assessment is not reviewed or updated every four years, the Treasurer is going to find a tremendous imbalance in that plan. I think the minister should almost make it mandatory that this be done; that it must be updated every four years, or a minimum of every four years.

Those are my few comments on this bill. I do support it.

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Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: I think every member of this House realizes that something has to be done with reassessment. I quite agree with the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh), the member for Brock (Mr. Partington), the member for Mississauga East (Mr. Gregory) and my friend the member for Haldimand-Norfolk (Mr. G. I. Miller) that the government had to move.

The member for Sudbury East came out with a very interesting comment. Somebody has been talking about reassessment in this province since 1968 and finally this government is moving on it. I can assure the members we will do it with the approval of those regions. I think our first test was with Sudbury and it worked out very well. I would say Sudbury was the most complicated jurisdiction. If I am not mistaken, there were 35 different jurisdictions in 11 municipalities, but now it is under control.

The same thing applied with Haldimand-Norfolk. This request came from the regional municipality. It was approved by a vote of 13 to six, and two councillors from the areas of Dunnville, Haldimand and Nanticoke voted against it.

I would like to point out that some farmers will certainly benefit from this reassessment. For instance, in Delhi farm taxes will go down by \$600,000, in Norfolk they will go down by \$346,000, in Nanticoke they will go down by \$177,000 and in Simcoe they will go down by \$16,000. Naturally, the taxes in Haldimand and

Dunnville will increase, but this ministry will provide them with the needed funds to phase in this process. Over three years, we will provide \$2.7 million to phase in the program.

I can assure the member for Mississauga East that yes, it is part of the legislation that it will be reviewed every four or five years. I would prefer four years. It is the intention of this government to follow through with more regions; at their request we will certainly look at that possibility.

Again, it shows the commitment of this government to make taxation more understandable because it is a very complex system, and taxpayers in this province deserve to be taxed under a system that is understandable.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I would like to call the third reading order, with the permission of the House.

Mr. Breaugh: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order: It is a bit unusual—as a matter of fact, it is against the standing orders—to do second and third reading of the bill on the same day. That was not my understanding of what would happen. It was my understanding that we would now move to Bill 12, and I would be quite happy to do that.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If the honourable member is on a point of order, I would like to respond to it to say, by all means, we would do that. I think it is quite customary after the second reading of a reasonably routine bill to do third reading and then go on to a companion bill, but if there is any objection, I am quite prepared to call third reading on another occasion. Is the member objecting?

Mr. Breaugh: Yes.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Okay.

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître moved second reading of Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: The fairness of the property tax system, particularly in county and regional areas, has been the subject of considerable debate. Many municipalities and a number of municipal associations have indicated that in order to achieve equity in the sharing of county and school levy requirements, the government should allow each county and its local municipalities the requested cost-sharing system of upper tier and school purposes for use as taxable assessment.

Les conseillers, les administrateurs et les contribuables ont tous indiqué leur préférence pour un régime fiscal plus compréhensible qui faciliterait la comparaison des impôts fonciers entre les biens immobiliers relevant de la compétence des comtés et des conseils scolaires.

The bill I am now introducing for second reading will permit any of the 26 counties within the province to implement a new cost-sharing system and update their assessments to a uniform base at the most opportune time.

La loi autorise le Ministre du Revenu (M. Nixon) à mettre en application la mise-à-jour de l'évaluation foncière à la demande d'un comté et d'une majorité des municipalités au sein du comté.

It requires that the county and each school board establish one mill rate for residential purposes and one mill rate for commercial purposes, to be applied uniformly throughout the county.

The county of Brant and six of the local municipalities have passed resolutions requesting the implementation of a uniform county-wide assessment update for taxation in 1987. Final tax bills normally issued in the month of May cannot go out until this legislation receives royal assent.

Mr. Partington: One of the purposes of the bill is to require that the portion of payment in lieu of taxes and telephone payments received by a municipality can be paid to a board or a municipality. I wonder whether the minister could describe the nature of payments that are made in lieu of taxes and telephone and telegraph payments.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: I am sorry I cannot explain to the member for Brock, but after consulting with my people, I can advise him what system or what formula is being used to calculate these taxes.

Mr. Partington: I am pleased to join the debate in support of Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act. I think, as the minister indicated, this act has the effect of promoting greater fairness in the distribution of property tax and it will be available throughout all the counties of Ontario. I note that to date the county of Brant and six of the local municipalities have passed a resolution requesting the implementation of a uniform county-wide assessment.

I note in the explanatory notes, "The purpose of the bill is to permit a county municipality to apply to the Minister of Revenue to institute a uniform assessment update of all real property

throughout the county on the same market value basis."

Uniformity is very important. Fairness is important. There was a concern raised with respect to an earlier bill, Bill 6, about the effect it might have on various segments of our society; for example, the farming community. Clearly, in implementing a system of fairness, I believe the bill would stress that different classes still have to be treated fairly, one to the other.

The purpose of this bill is to make sure that where there are two similar properties in a county, in a municipality, they basically have the same tax. For a tax to be different is totally unfair. It is an unfairness that has been going on for some time, it is an unfairness that must be corrected, and this certainly is the way to do it.

In those extreme cases where such a change in tax might be intolerable to some individuals, perhaps there should be some discretionary method of phasing in or alleviating such a burden over a period of time.

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Nevertheless, in the great majority of cases I am sure any adjustment would be minimal one way or another, but clearly fairness must dictate, fairness in property taxes and fairness in all walks of life relative to the earlier statements with respect to the judicial system where we see inequity and unfairness. The residents of Toronto have a system that affords them reasonable, expeditious justice to a \$3,000 level, whereas in the rest of the province the limit is \$1,000, beyond which the costs and the complications of a lawsuit become expensive and full of delays.

Certainly, we must make sure the type of injustice that the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) continues in the justice system is one that should not be perpetrated in the property tax system. There is great concern among members of society that the burden of property taxation is becoming too heavy and, clearly, it is. It is a tax that is paid with after-tax dollars. It is a growing tax; it is a tax that grows not only because of inflation but also because the province and the federal government are continuing to burden the local municipalities with a greater burden of services.

I might point out to the Treasurer the commitment made by the government some time ago to assume 60 per cent of the educational costs. Last year, that share went to an all-time low of 44.8 per cent, I think it was. There is a clear understanding of the fact that people in society are considering the property tax to be unfair and in need of change.

The thrust of Bill 12 will be to create fairness between property taxpayers, but it will not redress the problem of the growing burden on the property taxpayer, which I believe the government must address soon. Clearly, the part of the bill that requires the ministry to conduct an update every four years is important because it is necessary to make sure that the inequities that currently exist in the system do not recur.

Generally speaking, I think this bill will introduce fairness. It is not meant to create a greater burden on a class; it is implemented to create equity among all members of a class. I think it will do the job and I hope fairness in property taxation will shortly come to all the counties of Ontario, perhaps first to the one that requested it first, which is the county of Brant and the six local municipalities. I am pleased to support the bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Questions and comments?

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: To answer the member's previous question, the telephone taxes are based on five per cent of the gross receipts of the company rather than the assessment of wire and land right of way. That was the member's question, if am not mistaken.

Mr. Partington: That point can be answered later.

Mr. Breagh: I want to indicate that we will support the bill. We do have some reluctance with it. We have no problem that a request has come from Brant county and that we need the legislation to do that. The bill does address one part of a very complicated problem and that is to try to put together a uniform assessment rate that would go county-wide. That is fair.

My only difficulty is that it talks once again about market value assessment, and members will know I am not a big fan of market value assessment. We will support the bill because it is a request of a local municipality and it is at least consistent with positions that have been put forward over the years by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.

It does not solve a whole lot of problems but it does resolve one problem. This would not be our preference or priority. Quite frankly, there are other ways to resolve this. The assessment problem is a difficult one for many municipalities, but the problem of financing municipal government is the larger and more pertinent problem.

At some point, we would be very happy to see the Treasurer entertain a rather major funding thrust that would solve these municipal financial

problems that are becoming more and more serious by the day. In the meantime, I suppose we will have to be satisfied with this kind of tinkering with the process. In many respects, if somebody thought, as the previous government apparently did, that this market value assessment was such hot stuff, at some point they probably should have done what they said they were going to do, oddity that this would be, and instituted it province-wide.

It would have taken them out of office very quickly and I suspect this government will move with the same speed to implement market value assessment province-wide. If it were looking for some other good gimmick to pull, it could try regional government. I really enjoyed that one when these guys pulled that through Ontario. If the government wants two really winning propositions to put to the people in Ontario, there they are. They can go to market value assessment from one end to the other and there goes their landslide in the opposite direction, or they could try a few more regional governments. That is always good for the loss of a few seats on the government side.

We will support this because we think it is a not unreasonable request.

Mr. Gillies: Briefly, as my colleague has indicated, I will be supporting this bill. I am very conscious that the request has come forward from the county of Brant and the six component municipalities, none of which I represent, but my friend and neighbour the Treasurer does.

In supporting this bill, I want to express a cautionary note that I believe both the other speakers alluded to. Several of the lower-tier municipalities in Brant county are very small. The minister knows this. Their tax base is very modest. For example, in supporting this legislation, I do not want to go back to Brant county at some point, and I am sure the Treasurer does not, to have our friend the reeve of Onondaga, Mrs. Dougherty, punch us in the eye as she threatens to do every now and then because of her feeling that the province is shift.

Mrs. Dougherty and I share something by way of an affiliation that she does not share with the Treasurer. The concern is simply this: We want to ensure the viability—

Mr. Breagh: However, we will not go into that.

Mr. Foulds: Give us the gory details.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Don't anybody touch that.

Mr. Gillies: Leave it alone.

The concern simply is that the financial viability of these small municipalities is an integral part of their autonomy. I do not think any of us wants to do anything that would interfere with the right of these small municipalities to conduct their business. They obviously feel that uniform, county-wide assessment is something that will do them some good. I happen to believe it will.

The Treasurer knows the figures. We cite them from time to time. Education funding coming from the province, as a proportion of the whole pie, is at approximately 44.8 per cent now. My friend the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) will agree with me that it is moving in slightly the wrong direction from the Liberal promise of 60 per cent of education being funded by the province.

In the move to try to redress some of the inequities in the assessment, let us not inadvertently shift a burden on to very small and modestly funded municipalities that they cannot handle. I do not think that is the intent but I want to cite that caution in indicating my support for the bill.

Mr. Harris: I wonder whether the member for Brantford will entertain one question. He talked about the drop in provincial funding for education from some 48 per cent after this free-spending, free-wheeling, \$5-billion-over-inflation-as-of-tomorrow regime took office. I believe they made a commitment. They campaigned that 48 per cent was not enough, that it would go to 60 per cent. Of course, as the member for Brantford has pointed out, the record indicates that in those two years it has gone from 48 per cent down to 44.4 per cent.

I appreciate his concern for these municipalities. As we get into the whole assessment question, I wonder whether he has given any thought to the school boards as they have seen the provincial percentage shrink. This has had a great effect on some of the capital dollars required now because repairs have not kept up, such as roof repairs for old buildings. They have had to steal dollars from programs to do what repairs they can. When they deteriorate to such an extent, they need a whole rebuilding process.

Since the member mentioned it, I wonder whether he has heard from any of them in Brant county as to whether this is the case, that even the capital funding the minister announced is the greatest shortfall from request in the history of any school board in Ontario. I wonder whether he has given thought to that.

1610

Mr. Gillies: I will respond briefly to my colleague's question, the first I have had the opportunity to respond to in some two years. Of course, my colleague is quite correct about the situation my friend the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) is very conversant with at St. John's College School in Brantford, a school that serves the rural municipalities in Brant county as well as the city of Brantford, a school that was originally built to accommodate some 500 students, and now with one addition and with 19 portable classrooms, has to accommodate some 1,300 students. Yes, it is a problem and an extra burden for the Brant county Roman Catholic board of education and indeed for the public board of education to maintain all their obligations by way of operating their schools while at the same time facing such serious capital constraints.

The effect this has with regard to—whatever the number of this bill is we are debating.

An hon. member: Bill 12.

Mr. Gillies: Bill 12. We fear that there could be an additional shift away from the provincial responsibility for these expenditures over to the municipal taxpayers and that this could compound an already serious situation. I am very glad my colleague the opposition House leader was able to draw this to my attention at a time when two of the most senior ministers in a position to take care of the situation at a school such as, let us say, St. John's College in Brantford are here to listen and respond.

Hon. Mr. Grandmaitre: I know how everybody feels about assessment and reassessment. I agree with the member for Brantford that some small municipalities will certainly be hit and hit quite hard. Some of them simply cannot afford it and that is why this bill is permissive legislation. We recognize that for some small municipalities it is practically impossible. That is why this ministry has come to the rescue of small municipalities that cannot afford this new system. If requested, we will certainly try to help them resolve their differences.

I would like to remind the House that this is a very important bill due to the fact that final tax bills normally issued in the month of May cannot be mailed out until this legislation receives royal assent. I hope I will receive members' unanimity on this bill.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered for third reading.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE
(concluded)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for an address in reply to the speech of the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor at the opening of the session.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Perhaps I might say just before the debate begins that the House leaders have agreed that the time remaining between now and 5:45 p.m. will be equally shared and that the vote, if one is required, will be taken at that time.

Mr. Foulds: Whether the election is called next week or next fall, in all likelihood this will be the last major speech I will give in the Legislature. Therefore, with the members' indulgence, I would like to make some observations that are a combination of the personal, the public and policy.

Let me start with the personal. I just want to say that I have enjoyed my almost 16 years as an Ontario legislator. There is nothing I would rather have done with my life for the past 16 years. However, there comes a time for change and renewal. It was not an easy decision and I want to assure all members that it was not a decision that was made in haste, anger or frustration. It is just, as I say, that there does come time for a change.

It is always easy to listen to the tempting appeal of one's own ego—"Run just one more time because you can hold the seat for us"—but I have too much faith in democracy and the strength of our party to believe I am the only one who can hold the Port Arthur riding for our party. In fact, I am convinced that in the next parliament of this Legislature, the new New Democratic Party member for Port Arthur, Chris Southcott, will have a lot to contribute.

On a very personal note I recognize, as Robertson Davies tells us, that clichés are often true. That is why they become clichés. As the cliché goes, I want to spend more time with my family. My wife and I were married after the 1971 election and therefore my family has known nothing but a commuting, three-day-a-week husband and father. In effect, my wife has been a single parent. My two sons now are aged 12 and 14. Very simply put, I would like to spend some time being a full-time dad with them before they wave goodbye in five or six years.

As I say, I came to the conclusion that it was simply time for change and renewal, for me personally, for my constituency and for my own party.

When I was first elected to the Ontario Legislature, I promised myself that if the electors

wanted, I would serve three terms or 12 years. Back in 1971, that seemed like an eternity but time has sped by. It does, you know, when you are having fun. I want to say that in spite of the difficulties, the frustrations and the punishing demands of time of this job, it is a job worth doing, a job worth having and a job I have enjoyed. I have been asked by a number of people, including reporters, if I want a government job. My answer is simply: "Hell, no. I already have the best government job there has been being the MPP for Port Arthur." It has been fun. I would not have missed it for the world, but it now is five terms and almost 16 years later.

I always admired Syl Apps when he was captain of the great Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team of the 1940s and 1950s. When he retired at the height of his hockey career at the age of 32, he said, "I always thought it was better to retire when people might ask, 'Why are you quitting?' rather than wait around until they started to ask, 'Why don't you quit?'"

For me, there are only three jobs in this life that are worth doing. One is politics, one is writing and one is being a teacher. I plan to go back to teaching. I believe that if I can show some youngsters the glory of the symphony that is Shakespeare's work, then the last one third of my working life will also be worth while.

Before that, I want to make it clear that I plan to hang in here until that election is called. I plan to be the full-time MPP representing the people of Port Arthur both here and in my riding. For me, this can never be a part-time job.

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I want to talk for a minute or two about the old boys' club here at the Ontario Legislature. It is an old boys' club, an elitist club, but by and large it is a club made up of decent, hardworking men and women. If there were anything I could wish for it, I would wish sincerely that the next parliament will have far more women representing the ridings than there are at present or than there have been historically.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Half and half by the end of the century; that is the goal.

Mr. Foulds: I hope so.

I want to talk for a minute or two about my riding and my constituents. Back in 1972, in my first speech in this House, I said, the people of Port Arthur are the most decent, hardworking, ornery, but lovable people that I know. I still believe that in 1987. I want to thank them here publicly in this place, their Legislature, for the privilege and duty of representing them here for almost 16 years because I believe that any

politician who forgets that his source of power, his only source of strength and energy is the electorate is a politician in trouble and one who is not serving either his vocation or his constituents properly.

Therefore, I believe unreservedly in the wisdom of the electorate, in democracy. In that sense, I am both a populist and a democrat. I also strongly believe, like Edmund Burke, that a representative must be a leader as well as a listener. I strongly believe that a representative owes his constituents not merely his industry, but also his experience, his intelligence and his better judgement. So I say thank you to the people of Port Arthur for those occasions on which I have differed from them but on which they have endorsed me as I exercised my responsibilities as I saw them through my better judgement.

That gives me my transition to talk about the speech from the throne. Without being overly harsh or critical, let me just say that the speech from the throne showed little experience, less intelligence and no better judgement. It had no focus. It was significant that a page was actually missing from the text that the Lieutenant Governor read and nobody missed it.

I would like to point out that all the great political speeches, from Pericles's funeral oration over the dead Athenian soldiers through those of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address to Churchill's great wartime speeches or even John F. Kennedy's inaugural address, were always short, focused speeches. I point out to this administration that the speeches from the throne of all previous Liberal administrations, from Edward Blake to Mitchell Hepburn, were all done in three pages or less. No puffery or unrealistic goals for them.

Although there are many topics I would like to talk about, I will concentrate on three: the poverty of our present social assistance system, free trade and the north. My theme is simply this: Ontario is indeed a rich and wonderful province. We have magnificent resources, magnificent people and a so-called buoyant economy. However, we really do have two Ontarios, one we like to brag about and one most public figures want to ignore.

In that buoyant economy we have food banks and bread lines. We have the working poor paying more taxation than wealthy and profitable insurance companies. We have governments that are willing to trade our cultural and political independence and we have a geographic part of our province, the north, that like the homeless on

Toronto's streets, partakes not in the wealth this rich province is producing.

During my 16 years as an MPP, nothing, absolutely nothing, has given me more anguish and caused me more anger than the way those who require social assistance are treated in our society. My colleague the member for Scarborough West (Mr. R. F. Johnston) has brought this up again and again, as recently as May 5 and May 6 of this year. He pointed out that in spite of the billion-dollar windfall in profits for the Treasury of Ontario, somehow the speech from the throne did not mention those people who have been left out of the prosperity of Peterson's Ontario.

Why is it, he asked, that there was no mention of food banks? Why is it that with a so-called low unemployment rate of five per cent or six per cent we have food banks in this province? Why was there no mention of the things the government was going to do specifically for people on social assistance? I ask this Premier (Mr. Peterson), this Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) and this government, where is the commitment to full employment?

I was much struck by a phrase used by Ken Dryden, the former youth commissioner for this province, when he appeared before the standing committee on economics and finance. When he was asked about his experience under both Liberal and Conservative administrations with regard to their commitment to full employment, he indicated quite fairly that there were good people in both parties in positions both in the government and in the bureaucracy, but he said the words "full employment" were used "like a comma in passing as they hurried on to find the end of the sentence." That should be the full sentence.

We in the New Democratic Party say that full employment has to be any government's number one job. We in the New Democratic Party have an ideal of a society in which all persons who wish to take a productive part in our society, in our work force, should be able to do so.

A full economy is possible. It exists today in the free world in three widely divergent countries, Sweden, Austria and Japan. In those societies, those living on social security have not been forced to inhabit some kind of second-rate secondary economy, such as exists in Ontario today because that is the truth of the present situation.

There must be four basic goals of a social assistance system. First, it must help people to gain more control over their own lives. Second, it must provide enough for them to play a full part in our society. Third, it must ensure a fair,

equitable and accountable delivery of services. Fourth, it must be delivered with humanity, maintaining the personal dignity of all recipients. I regret more than I can say that at the present time none of these goals is being adequately met in our society.

I also want to say that it is shameful that the poor in our province, in our country, are largely women and children. You can roll out the statistics: 180,000 children make up 38 per cent of Ontario's social assistance recipients; a further 180,000 children are in families of the working poor living below the poverty line; 56 per cent of all low-income Canadians are female; 66 per cent of low-income people between 16 and 64 are women; 70 per cent of the elderly poor are women; 82.7 per cent of the elderly unattached poor are women; 60.2 per cent of single-mother families were poor in 1985.

In Canada and in Ontario in the 1980s, a large majority of the poor are women; women with children and elderly women. Poverty has become sexually oriented. We should not be proud that when it comes to poverty, the phrase "women and children first" is all too appropriate. There is no doubt that in our present social assistance system, social assistance recipients are treated as secondary human beings. Second-rate or second class may be more appropriate terms.

I want to emphasize that these people are not and must not be treated as some kind of second-rate human beings, as much for our sake as a society as for their sakes as people. People who are already victims of society or of their own inadequacies or of their own disabilities over which they have little, if any, control must not be further victimized by the way they are treated. The helpless and the vulnerable must be treated with the same respect and dignity as we expect for ourselves. Our levels of support and our methods of delivery at the present time guarantee poverty rather than dignity. As well as economic poverty, it promotes a poverty of spirit rather than a liberation of that spirit.

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The system, as I have seen it administered daily from my constituency office and the problems we face there, is based not on generosity or compassion but on a rather grudging admission that the poor will be always with us. I refuse to accept that. We need also to devise and administer a social system based on two criteria: (1) that we are indeed our brothers' and sisters' keepers and (2) that society does need to distribute its wealth so that those in need receive what is needed. In a society as rich as

Ontario in these so-called buoyant times, surely we must aim for that. Food, clothing, shelter, health care and education are everybody's right in a society this rich. This government has yet to guarantee all our people those rights.

In the previous section, I have been speaking about economic justice. I know that is difficult for Liberals and Tories, because they are both caught in an ideological straitjacket. They cannot honestly bring themselves to believe that intervention in an economy might be a good thing to do. They intervene occasionally, but only when pushed to do so or in response to an electoral need. This government displayed its ideological bias, for example, when upon assuming government, like the federal Conservatives, it started selling off its crown corporations such as the Urban Transportation Development Corp.

However, in this section of my speech, I would like to plead with the government merely to take legislative action in a narrower field, in taxation reform. Our one million unemployed, underemployed and poverty-stricken Ontarians not only deserve help but also are a drain on our economy. Therefore, it only makes sense to take certain legislative steps to enhance their buying power in order to stimulate not only their lives but also the economy.

It makes common sense to eliminate all Ontario health insurance plan premiums for the working poor. It makes common sense to raise today's niggardly provincial minimum wage. It makes common sense to institute a dental plan for both the elderly and the young. It makes common sense to raise the tax threshold so that the working poor, those working in Ontario but living below the poverty line and who now pay Ontario income tax, would not pay that Ontario income tax.

If there is one taxation measure I could persuade the Treasurer to do in his budget tomorrow, it would be to raise the tax threshold so that those living below the poverty line do not pay Ontario income tax. Is it not shameful that at present, a single-parent family with a 1986 poverty-line income of \$18,836 has to pay \$715.70 in Ontario income tax? Of course, they pay more in federal income tax.

I say that is wrong. I say it is wrong when we have profitable and financially successful insurance companies testifying before the standing committee on economic affairs that they could not remember the last time they paid corporate income tax. One of them actually did remember: it was back in 1972, but it was not in Ontario or Canada; it was in the United States.

Therefore, I say there is one thing this government should commit itself to tomorrow, and that is a restructuring of the taxation system of this province so the working poor in this province do not pay income tax.

In this final portion of my speech, I want to turn my attention to free trade and northern Ontario. I was much struck about two weeks ago when I read in a Thunder Bay newspaper that "Most Business People Say Yes (To Free Trade)". That article said: "Eighty per cent of the audience at the Valhalla Inn's annual economic conference Wednesday voted yes to free trade in a questionnaire handed out by economic researcher Peter Anderson. Anderson told local business people that 'the largest contribution' of the current Canada-US free trade talks might be 'to give Canada some exemptions from the very restrictive trade legislation now passing through Congress.'"

From my personal experience in accompanying the standing committee on finance and economic affairs to Washington, I want to say that people who believe that are living in a cloud-cuckoo-land. We will not get any exemptions or special treatment from the United States. Governments like the present Mulroney government are living in a cloud-cuckoo-land, and as long as this government continues to sit on the fence with regard to free trade, it too is living in a cloud-cuckoo-land.

That trip was a very valuable one. It taught us, as Ontario legislators, the following truths: The US Congress remains in a very protectionist mood, and although the United States is still the leading western economic nation, the men and women of Congress dimly realize their economy has peaked; they realize their share of the world market and their own domestic market is under attack from many nations, not merely Canada. Therefore, their only interest in free trade is part of a method to expand their domestic market. Any interest the United States has in free trade is simply to make Canada part of Fortress North America. That is not going to work.

One of the famous stories that came out of that trip is the story of Senator Matsunaga. Eleven Ontario legislators crowded into his office. He had, in his view, become a Canadian hero by casting the deciding vote for fast-track negotiations on free trade between Canada and the United States.

His views were expressed by phrases like this: "The sooner your country blends with ours the better." "I am a free-trader, except when it comes to Hawaiian sugar." "Free trade means an

integrated economy." "I am talking about economic union." Although his views were graciously expressed, there was no doubt left that Senator Matsunaga had no understanding of Canada's fight for independence for over 120 years, nor did he think Canadians should resist the welcoming bear hug of American culture.

But Senator Matsunaga was not the most protectionist of the members that we met; Senator Heinz, of the 57 varieties and the \$7-million campaign to get himself elected, has a very protectionist bill aimed at Canadian steel. Perhaps the phrase that struck me most was the phrase uttered by Congressman John Dingell, the Democrat from Michigan, as he threw his arm across the shoulder of the chairman of our committee and said, "Gentlemen, all we want is a fair advantage."

On behalf of the New Democratic Party, I want to say they cannot have that fair advantage. Canada does not wish to become a cultural, economic or political dependency of the United States. We wish to remain the independent nation we have been for 120 years.

Where has that fair trade advantage got northern Ontario? Northern Ontario has been one of the major casualties of free trade discussions, as exemplified through the whole softwood lumber debate.

Unlike the southern part of Ontario, northern Ontario has never recovered from the recession of the early 1980s. In fact, the recession is deepening and worsening across the north. Five years ago, the unemployment rate in northern Ontario was on a par with that of the rest of the province, at about eight per cent. Now, the real unemployment rate across the north is about 12 per cent; in places such as Sault Ste. Marie it is 15 to 20 per cent, and in Atikokan, a single-industry town in the northwest, it is 35 per cent.

The big difference between layoffs in northern Ontario and layoffs in southern Ontario is that if you get laid off in Atikokan, Fort Frances or Terrace Bay, you cannot go across the street to get another job.

This government must have the courage and guts to make some significant interventions in the northern economy. That, frankly, is where the present Liberal government has failed northerners, as have the past Tory governments.

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I want to outline quickly eight ways in which I believe this government must intervene in the northern economy.

1. The northern Ontario fund must be a genuine fund managed by northerners with

enough capital in it so that they can create their own industry and, I say frankly, their own economic independence.

2. The resource planning agreements must be signed by a government, a company and the townspeople before any new industry goes into the north so that the government and the people know the plans of those companies, not merely weeks but years in advance.

3. We need to have a genuine forestry institute in northern Ontario that would develop forestry manufacturing machinery. Do members know that a factory in Sweden making scarifiers, which are sold all over the world, is 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle? If they can market forestry equipment from 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle in Sweden, we can market forestry and mining equipment from the towns in northern Ontario all over the world. That is why we need 4.

4. We need an Ontario mining development foundation as well as a forestry institute.

5. We also need to develop a technology research and development institute in the north. That is because northern Ontario will not be disadvantaged in competing in world markets with the new microchip technology.

6. When is this government going to have the guts to equalize gasoline prices between northern and southern Ontario? It is a cliché but it is true: If the government can equalize beer and liquor prices, if it can take on the distilleries, it sure as hell can take on the oil companies.

7. We need a medical research facility in northern Ontario. We have the population the size of Saskatchewan's. Saskatchewan has a medical school. We need and deserve a medical school as well.

8. Finally, for those cases where we do face layoffs, where we cannot avoid shutdowns in the single-industry towns in northern Ontario, we need a community adjustment fund to make sure people can handle the transition and we can get new industry into northern Ontario.

I want to conclude on a very personal note. I have said it before and I will repeat it. About two and a half to three years ago, I came to the heartbreaking realization that my own two sons, aged 12 and 14, would in all probability have to seek their fortunes, their futures, their jobs and their ideals outside of northwestern Ontario, the area of this province I have called home all my life, the land I have tried to represent and fight for in this Legislature for the last 15 years.

I belong to this party and I will always belong to this party, the New Democratic Party, because

it is the one and so far the only party that has proved it will do its damndest to ensure that not only my sons but also the sons and daughters of all northerners will have at least the option of fulfilling their dreams, hopes and ambitions in the land that I love, the land that I have spent my entire political career trying to represent and for which I have tried to get some measure of social and economic justice.

Inside or outside of politics, whatever the future holds, I will not rest, I know the New Democratic Party will not rest, and I hope this Legislature will not rest until northern Ontario takes its rightful place in the mainstream of Ontario's economic life.

May I therefore leave with all my colleagues from all parties in this Legislature this motto, which has been my political motto for the last 16 years: "I shall live this life but once; therefore, if there be any good thing I can do or any kindness I can show, let me not postpone it nor delay, but let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again."

I say to the government, to the opposition and to my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, if there is any good thing that can be done for the people of Ontario, do not postpone it, do not delay; do it now, for they shall not pass this way again.

The Deputy Speaker: Before recognizing the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), I would like the agreement of the House for an equal division of time among the parties and a vote at 5:45 p.m. Is the House agreed? Agreed.

Interjections.

The Deputy Speaker: The House had not previously agreed. The House leaders may have, but the House had not agreed.

Mr. Harris: It was mentioned.

The Deputy Speaker: It was mentioned, but the House leaders are not the House.

Mr. Harris: The House leader asked for unanimous consent of the House.

The Deputy Speaker: It is my understanding that the government House leader proposed and the other two House leaders concurred. That is not the House. The House has now given me consent.

Mr. Gillies: It is nothing new or unusual for the member for Port Arthur (Mr. Foulds) to make it very difficult for the person who has to follow him in speaking in this Legislature. I think I speak for all of us in the chamber at this moment if I share the feelings I had as I listened to someone who has served the people of this

province and the residents of his constituency so long and so well.

I think we were all touched by the words of the member for Port Arthur. I want to indicate on behalf of our party that he leaves here, I am sure, for a full and rich retirement. I anticipated his remarks that it will not be a retirement in the traditional sense of the word. The member certainly leaves with a considerable reservoir of respect and goodwill from the members of the Progressive Conservative caucus. We want to indicate to him our very best wishes in his next career.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to quote Winston Churchill at such a time. For the member for Port Arthur: "Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

The Treasurer liked that. I have seen him applaud Churchill's quotes before.

It would also be appropriate, and as is traditional, some time during the debate on the speech from the throne to pay respect and tribute to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, who certainly has the loyalty and goodwill of the members of the official opposition as he goes about his very serious responsibilities and does so, we believe, with such flair and natural ability. We certainly want to indicate to His Honour our best wishes for the job he is doing.

However, I suppose the main thing we want to talk about today is not the eloquent and able manner in which His Honour delivered the speech from the throne, but rather the raw material that was handed to him by the real drafters of that particular speech, the members of the government. Unfortunately, His Honour presented to us probably the lengthiest and possibly the most vacuous speech from the throne in living memory. If one takes the time to count, one will find that this particular speech from the throne contains no fewer than 157 promises that can be broken down in a number of ways.

First, let us look at it just from a statistical point of view. I know my friend the member for Sudbury East is a bit of a statistician. Of the 157 promises, 43 can actually be counted as representing new policy initiatives; 50 of the promises were simply announcements indicating continuing support to existing programs; 38 of the promises were reannouncements of previous commitments; in 19 cases, the government boldly announced it would either undertake new studies, release previously commissioned studies or wait for advice from ongoing studies; and in

seven cases, the government announced initiatives that could potentially expand the size of the provincial bureaucracy.

If we view this particular speech from the throne with any cynicism, it is because we see it as a hotchpotch, perhaps almost a fast-food-restaurant approach to government. It is a menu of everything the government is doing, everything it would like to do and everything it is studying doing, but it is not a prescription for the economic and social development of our province. It is rather a description of government activity or would-be activity. One might as well have handed His Honour the Kwic Index, which we all refer to from time to time and which describes all of the programs and activities of the government, because that index would have been just about as enlightening in terms of the directions of this administration as was the speech itself.

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We see no cohesion or direction, and we fear little sincerity and little intent to implement, in this particular document. Members need only look back to the throne speech of one year ago at all the promises and all the good intentions left unimplemented by this particular administration. Following His Honour's address, the debate in this chamber has continued on a more or less predictable and pro forma basis. The various government members stand and talk about the inspired message that has come down from above, and the members of the opposition get up and criticize this completely inadequate document.

I am afraid that all too seldom during these debates do we hear new ideas or new suggestions put forward as to the direction the government should be going in, and all too often we hear this pro forma support or opposition and indeed the usual trading of insults.

I am sorry the member for Kitchener (Mr. D. R. Cooke) has left the chamber, because I was sitting the other day listening intently to his contribution to this speech, which started off with a quite remarkable insult in that it was based on no less an authority than the holy Koran. After listening to several members of the opposition speak in the debate, the member for Kitchener quoted the Koran, saying, "The harshest sound in nature is the braying of an ass," which is but one indication of the esteem and the respect shown by this particular government and its supporters for the members of both opposition parties.

Perhaps in the absence of the member for Kitchener, I would quote back to him another

quote from that most holy book: "Some are illiterate. They know naught but their own false notions and they do nothing but conjecture." I would say that the member for Kitchener, in considering the tone and content of a debate such as this, could well remember that and, indeed, so could some other members of the government and its party.

The suggestion comes from across the floor that the opposition has nothing to offer. The election is imminent and, as is alluded to from time to time by various spokesmen for the government, the Liberal Party stands on the threshold of a great majority. How many times have we heard that sandwiched between government advertisements in the last couple of weeks? I read it in recent days said by no less a person than the Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations (Mr. Kwinter) and I have heard it elsewhere.

Let me perhaps caution the more sober and experienced political minds now sitting opposite. If that kind of statement and that kind of posture does not really fit with their game plan, let me assure the government members that kind of posture and that kind of presumption certainly fits with our game plan.

I would direct members' attention back to the last several elections, both federal and provincial, that this particular jurisdiction has been through. The presumption of majorities and the presumption of victory sometimes just do not quite work out.

Before addressing the individual points within the speech from the throne, perhaps we should build a framework in terms of the real, tangible legacy of this government through the first two years of its tenure, which we hope will be short-lived. As I said, we have recently had 157 promises offered by the government, but the real legacy and the real track record of this government is perhaps more enlightening and more cogent than is the throne speech promise list.

We have an administration that in two short years has increased spending by 30 per cent. We have an administration that has taken \$5 billion more out of the pockets of the taxpayers of this jurisdiction than was the case the year it took office. We have a government that has reversed the efforts undergone in this province to get some sort of handle on the size and complexity of the bureaucracy of the government of Ontario.

The previous administration reduced the size of the civil service by some 4,000 persons without, I believe, damaging the delivery of programs. This government has increased that

number by approximately 5,000 persons. We have a government that is very quick to put its hand into the pockets of the taxpayers, the working people of this province. We have a government that is very quick indeed, with very little framework and very little direction, to try to solve all the problems facing the government of Ontario by throwing money at them.

We have a government, I believe, that in some respects has become remarkably cynical in two short years. I was driving from Brantford this morning. I did the drive in my usual hour and some minutes because, of course, I never go over the speed limit. In that hour, I flicked around my three favourite radio stations, and in one hour, I heard four advertisements for various programs of the government of Ontario.

Mr. Swart: Four? Incredible.

Mr. Gillies: Incredible, absolutely incredible.

I would say, in fairness, some of the programs being talked about in these advertisements are very good. None of us opposes programs to increase awareness of the problems of family violence or to increase awareness of programs available to address youth unemployment. We do not question the content at all. But the timing of this intense media blitz is interesting indeed. Could it be that in two short years this government has taken hold of every advertising agency available to it in Metropolitan Toronto in an effort to puff its programs in the pre-election period? I would hope I could be disabused of a notion quite so cynical.

On the subject of government advertising, I am sure we have all watched with great interest some of the television advertisements that go on. Again, we do not quarrel with the legitimate attempts to convey necessary information to the people of this province. Have members seen the ads of the Minister of Skills Development (Mr. Sorbara)? The little computer graphics triangles with this meandering green line that wraps itself around them, one after another, and at the end of the ad you are left marvelling at the wonders of computer graphics technology. You are also left wondering what the devil the point of that ad was and what it was the minister, at quite considerable expense, was trying to tell us.

This at a time when we are being called by our constituents unable to access training money and unable to get young people into the various youth employment programs, and I say very directly to the members on the Treasury benches opposite, the money squandered on those extravagant and meaningless television ads could have put young

people to work and could have put young people into training opportunities in this province.

They opted for the big sell, they opted for the big message and they have turned their backs on an election commitment to put every young person in this province to work. We say shame. It is about time this government learned that the substance is, in fact, more important than the message.

The speech from the throne, in all its lengthy dissertation and in putting out 157 promises before the people of Ontario, has offered no meaningful economic framework for the economic improvement of this province, and it has offered us no signal as to the direction, in great terms, in which the government intends to take this province.

As we look at the various economic references in this speech, we see, to our astonishment I might add, that the cornerstone of the government's economic plan seems to be, for the second year running, the high-technology fund and the Premier's Council. One has to give the government an A for nerve for bringing this one up again, after the complete and abysmal embarrassment it proved to be for this administration in the last year. We all know the story.

1700

Mr. Grossman: I have forgotten.

Mr. Gillies: My leader has forgotten, so I will refresh his memory.

Last year, His Honour informed the House that there would be a \$1-billion technology fund and everybody on the Treasury benches applauded in wonder at this marvellous initiative. But then we started hearing a few of the details. The \$1-billion technology fund was over 10 years, so it was really only \$100 million a year in the technology fund. I might add that in the next step—and this is like playing a game of 20 questions; if you ask enough questions, you will get to the root of it—only \$50 million a year of this high-technology fund was actually new money. So the \$1-billion technology fund is really a \$50-million technology fund, and they could not even spend that.

There were two announcements in 1986 that had anything do with this technology fund. One was the premature and everlastingly embarrassing Exploracom project. The \$17.5 million for Abe's Disneyland on the waterfront—

Mr. Grossman: It should be opening soon.

Mr. Gillies: It should be opening soon, but it is not going ahead.

The other announcement was for a cash grant of \$114,645 to go to the university research incentive fund. Unfortunately, the Exploracom project is not going ahead. There were a couple of problems with that one.

Mr. Barlow: Tell us about those problems.

Mr. Gillies: Does the member not recall the problems?

Mr. Barlow: Help us out.

Mr. Gillies: Apparently, the announcement was a little premature and the structure was not really in place to announce Mr. Schwartz's grant. It became a bit of a political embarrassment because some cad in the opposition had the nerve to raise it. Then it just went from bad to worse and all the warnings that the opposition parties put forward, that perhaps this project was not going to proceed on merit, came to be. The project is not going ahead, so the \$17.5 million was stopped. Are the members following me?

Mr. Andrewes: We are listening.

Mr. Gillies: The \$17.5 million was stopped, but only after about 40-odd people had uprooted their families and moved to Toronto to take up positions with the company, and now the Premier has left them high and dry.

But that is all in parentheses, because when we actually add up the money expended, the \$1-billion technology fund turned, last year, into a \$114-million technology fund. In fact, this fund is not coming anywhere near to meeting the challenge or the financial commitment of the former Board of Industrial Leadership and Development fund. That is the reality.

With reference to the Premier's Council, I was among the first to say when the council was announced that there are some very prominent, high-powered people who have lent their names to this particular council for the administration of the technology fund, and I want to indicate to these very worthy citizens that they should beware. These very worthy citizens and these very capable, high-profile people should look back at the experience of the volunteer members of the Innovation Development for Employment Advancement board, the experience of those people on the IDEA board in the Wyda affair, in the Graham Software affair and in all of the other financial indiscretions of the Premier's administration with respect to IDEA. The initial and continuing reaction of this administration when those scandals blew up was to say: "There is an independent board in place. It was not our doing. It is their fault." Do members remember that?

It was Ian Macdonald and his people who put the pressure on this administration to fund Wyda when that went down the tubes and to fund Graham Software when that went down the tubes, and so on. So the caution I issue to these very worthy people on the Premier's technology fund is, if they screw up and the going gets rough, they should not look to the Premier to back them up. They should ask Mr. Schwartz. The Premier of this province is very quick to cut bait, very quick indeed. I just offer that cautionary note to the members of the technology council. So we move on from what we have to hope is an improved situation in high technology. We really hope that something good comes of this dollar commitment and this Premier's fund.

We move then to other aspects of the economic policy offered by this government. We see northern Ontario. For months now, our friend the member for Port Arthur and all the northern members in this caucus have raised the continuing recession in northern Ontario. Many of us have been up there. Many of the government members, as ministers, have been up there on business. They know what it is like. Many of us on committees have been up there. I say to my friends, the recession continues in northern Ontario.

While this government sits around wallowing in self-congratulation in the speech from the throne, we have rampant unemployment in northwestern Ontario. We have a 300 per cent increase in layoffs in northwestern Ontario and a 40 per cent increase in layoffs in northeastern Ontario. Quite frankly, it is now at the point that when we on the standing committee on resources development went up there to see what the problems were and to talk to the people, the reaction was very close to: "Why don't you guys just go away? We have had ministerial studies. We have had task forces. We have had various committees of this Legislature come up. If all you are going to do is tie us up day after day making presentations and repeatedly taking back to Toronto the message that you already know, then we do not want you here."

What they are saying is, "We want a meaningful commitment and a meaningful economic framework for northern Ontario from this government."

One year ago this government announced a northern development fund of, as it transpired, \$17 million to redress the economic inequities of the most vast region of our province. They were willing to give \$17 million to Abe Schwartz. What on earth? What are the single-resource

communities—Kenora, Rainy River, Sault Ste. Marie and all those communities—to do with \$17 million?

My colleague the member for Cochrane South (Mr. Pope) then found, as he conducted some modest investigation, that they did it again, because only about half of that \$17 million was new money. Those guys are playing with mirrors and they are playing with smoke when there are people in our province who are in very serious need.

It now has been adequately documented by our party how this government mishandled the softwood lumber issue. It now has been adequately demonstrated how this government was complicit in the decision that was taken by Ottawa. They were not victims. They did not stand back in awe and watch as this direction was taken. The letter drafted by the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources demonstrates very clearly that they were complicit in that decision and have to take some responsibility for the effects of it. The north languishes and wonders when it is going to see some meaningful action.

In this throne speech, we see some verbal attention, anyway, paid to eastern Ontario.

Mr. Wiseman: Very little.

Mr. Gillies: I hear one of my colleagues from eastern Ontario say, "Very little." I think he is right.

What do we see? We see a commitment to open a series of offices in the east where, in one of the most remarkable statements to come out of this throne speech, it is hoped that the bureaucrats of the Ontario government are going to teach the people of eastern Ontario to be good business people. I say to the government, give us a break. I would suggest we do not need a series of offices, even in the very worthy community of Renfrew, to teach some of the most entrepreneurial and skilled people in our province how to be good business people.

When I was in eastern Ontario during the last couple of weeks I got a message from the people. Really, what they would prefer is that the government not open an office to tell them how to be business people, but that in some minor respects the government should try to get off their backs a little, should start caring a bit about the 19 tax increases that have been brought in by this fledgling administration, by the increased revenues flowing to the Treasurer out of the cash registers of our small businesses and out of the pockets of our citizens.

Maybe, just maybe, we should start being a little sensitive to their legitimate wish to conduct their business in a healthy economic climate with the minimum of red tape in which we can entwine them and let them get on with it.

While I am sure that my friend the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) would love to have an office opened in Renfrew—and we would all like to be there for the ribbon-cutting with him—

Mr. Wiseman: He would prefer Pembroke; I would like Renfrew.

Mr. Gillies: Pembroke, pardon me. Renfrew next year. Maybe, just maybe, the Minister of Education would be doing the business people in his riding more of a favour by giving them a break and letting them get on with their work as opposed to giving them bureaucrats to show them what to do.

It has become quite apparent in the last number of months that the economic directions, in terms of practical, helpful suggestions for the improvement of our province economically, are not coming from the government. They are not coming from statements by the ministry. I really think the most helpful suggestions are coming from the select and standing committees.

We have seen some very clear and workable ideas come forward from the standing committee on resources development and other committees. Things the Premier said he was going to do, like reform the Workers' Compensation Board—

Mr. Andrewes: Reform Hydro.

Mr. Gillies: —like reform the accountability processes of Ontario Hydro; things that the now Premier said he was going to do on that now famous visit to the Burns Foods plant in Kitchener, when he said that layoffs and the neglect of working people would not happen in a Peterson administration, that in fact we would see new and stirring reforms, that we would see accountability put in place so that working people could not be tossed out on the street; on all of these wonderful things that our good friend the Premier thought were so important when he sought the office he now holds we now hear nothing.

I want to issue a challenge to the government on behalf of our party. Indeed its most senior ministers, the people who pull the strings, are here. We would like to issue a challenge to them to review the recommendations coming forward from the standing and select committees of this House, to address themselves to the recommendations coming from the resources development committee. Our challenge to them is, quite apart from 157 throne speech promises, if they really

want to do something to help working people and if they really want to do something to reform, they could do a heck of a lot worse than just implementing the recommendations coming out of the committees of this House on a whole range of topics. If they did nothing less, they would be taking a distinct step forward from where they are now.

We saw other promises in this throne speech on the environment. Again, I say to my friend the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley), the goodwill that he built up in the first number of months as minister is eroding somewhat. The leadership in terms of the Hydro banking question is not coming from the minister now; it is coming from the select committee on the environment.

So we say, again, the government should not delay and should not wait for an opportune political moment. It should implement the recommendation of the select committee on the environment, the provision that will stop Hydro from having the privilege of breaking the government's own environmental standards.

On education, the minister is not coming close to meeting the requirements, in terms of capital needs, of the schools of this province. I know the minister understands the problem, but his administration is moving in entirely the wrong direction. When he assumed office, the province bore the cost of 48 per cent of education in this province.

The minister said he was going to restore the provincial share of education spending to 60 per cent. We say to the minister that he is not fulfilling his word and he is not moving in the direction that we believe he should be moving, and indeed that he committed himself to more.

By way of conclusion, I want to say on behalf of my colleagues and my party that we believe the overall direction that is needed to move this province forward is lacking, that the government's menu of promises in the throne speech is inadequate, that it is time now for the government to focus and get down to work and to put before the people of this province the kind of practical reforms we believe are necessary. If it does less than that, then it is not fulfilling all of the promises and all of the commitments it has made to our nine million citizens.

Hon. Mr. Conway: It is a pleasure and an honour for me to stand here and support the motion, unamended I might note, standing in the name of my colleague and friend the member for York East (Ms. Hart) and seconded by my friend and colleague the member for Kent-Elgin (Mr.

McGuigan). I have had the opportunity over the last number of days to hear a number of the contributions made by a number of my colleagues in this debate. I regret that I was not able to hear, in a personal way, all of the comments, but I was pleased to have heard the many speeches, and particularly to have heard the speech this afternoon by the member for Port Arthur who spoke with such eloquence and with such feeling about matters that have long been of great concern to him.

I want to say I found it an interesting debate. A few weeks ago, we heard that this throne debate drove the member for Scarborough West, through some considerable irascibility, to the movies. He was speaking at one point about the movie, *The Man Who Would Be King*. He said it reminded him of the Premier. I rather thought it might have reminded the member for Scarborough West of what might have been three or four years ago.

At any rate, we then had the member for Oshawa (Mr. Breaugh) who drove through a lot of traffic concern to Paul Simon and Graceland. I found that an interesting intervention as well, to say nothing of the comments by the illustrious member, the member for Ottawa West (Mr. Baetz) who entertained us with quite a parade through baby food, Luvs and Pampers and a variety of other things that are of great concern to my friend from Ottawa West.

This afternoon I want to pay some particular attention to the comments offered by the two party leaders opposite because I did spend a very considerable amount of time some two weeks ago listening to the comments made by the leader of the third party and by the leader of the official opposition. I found it interesting that the leader of the third party should spend so much of his time focusing on the document on which, when I think of it, we were spending some time working about two years ago. I think it was two years ago when the new Miller government was sworn in. I think it is almost two years ago yesterday that cabinet was sworn in amidst great flourish; very heady days indeed.

I thought it was very interesting that the leader of the third party would spend so much of his time focusing upon that particular business. He was full of exhortation that certain matters be observed. I almost had the feeling that the leader of the third party was worried. In fact, I heard him this morning on the people's radio here in Toronto and he sounded almost despondent as he was communicating with his audience at 7:45 this morning. I found it interesting that he should

be so concerned that none of us have an identity beyond that particular arrangement. I think the leader of the third party is altogether too narrow in his focus and he does not understand the identity that this government has developed from Kenora to Cornwall and from Kensington to Timmins.

At one point, the leader of the third party actually had the audacity to suggest that the government was not doing very well on the national scene. So desperate is the reach now of the leader of the third party that he would offer that opinion at this particular point in time, but I thought it was even more interesting, at one point, that the leader of the third party should offer the opinion, and I quote the member for York South (Mr. Rae): "It is not the glitz, it is not the showbiz... that is important in Ontario today."

1720

That is interesting, because a few weeks ago I picked up a journal that is well read across the province, the *Eganville Leader*, a very important journal in the Ottawa Valley. On page 3 or 4 was the following: "NDP Leader Bob Rae and Ish Theilheimer, a recently nominated acclaimed candidate for the upcoming election in north Renfrew, sang up a storm at the recent nominating convention." There they are.

The leader of the third party and the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) were having an interesting discussion the other day about Neville Chamberlain. I looked at this and I thought, "My God, the leader of the third party is more like Charlie Chamberlain than Neville Chamberlain." I thought it was rather interesting that the leader of the third party should advise us all to eschew glitz and showbiz, but outside of this place the leader of the third party is singing an old song.

I just want to warn the leader of the third party that two years ago he began in the campaign in the spring of 1985 by singing, "Frank, they have turned your plaid suit blue." By the end of the campaign the independent observers on another bus were singing, "And frankly, Bob, you cannot sing too."

I hope the leader of the third party does not forget his—

Interjection.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I say to my friend the member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Laughren) that the leader of the third party was offering an opinion about perhaps a lack of focus and some confusion in this throne speech. Surely the leader of the third party was really thinking as the executive director of the Ontario New Democratic Party

was thinking when he told the Toronto Star the other day about the campaign that the Ontario New Democrats ran under the leadership of the member for York South just two years ago. I quote Brian Harling who just 48 hours ago said: "We had some problems in the last campaign. We didn't improve as much as we had hoped to. Our message was too confusing, unfocused." I can only say to my friend the leader of the third party that on the basis of that self analysis, I am not going to comment further on the ability of the third party to observe confusion and a want of focus.

But then, I really want to have a few things to say about my friend the leader of the official opposition, because I listened in its entirety to his speech a few weeks ago.

As I have said before, I have a great deal of regard and some real affection for the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick (Mr. Grossman). I have said on many occasions we were elected together, and I have happy memories of the 12 years that the two of us have spent in this assembly together. He is a very interesting fellow is the Leader of the Opposition, but I thought he was stretching interest beyond credibility when he commented that he thought this particular speech was too much of a grab bag, too much of—I think he said at one point, "a panoply of requests and a wish list;" and "an intrusive grab bag," said the Leader of the Opposition.

I say to my friend the member for Nickel Belt, can he imagine the Leader of the Opposition, a man who sat in a government here two years ago and participated in the famous document of June 4, 1985, having the nerve and the unmitigated gall to stand up and say that anyone could top this particular document? I ask the members, is there no shame left in the official opposition? I know there is a great deal going, but I had hoped that before the end of the day there would at least be some shame left.

I have to say to my friend the Leader of the Opposition that if he thinks we have forgotten the Tory party's last effort here in June 1985, he is sadly mistaken. I cannot conceive that he would make those comments thinking that we might have forgotten.

Mr. Laughren: Remind us.

Mr. Martel: Read a few extracts.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I would not want to. It is too pleasant an afternoon to take my friends in the Legislature through that long and painful process that we remember from that day in June 1985.

I listened here for the last number of weeks to the interventions being made, official and

unofficial—as I look to my friend, the member for Scarborough Centre (Mr. Davis)—from the official opposition. I have to say, "What are we to make of the Tory party in Ontario in this, the springtime of our opportunity, 1987?"

I really wonder where they stand on policy. It depends on the day, it really does. It is not the Minister of Education who makes that observation; no less a person than the House leader for the official opposition told a group of people on the people's television network last fall, quoting the member for Nipissing (Mr. Harris) who, when asked on Dateline Ontario about his caucus's apparent flip-flop on a number of issues—I will not go into the list—said, "We in the Conservative caucus get up some days feeling different than we do on other days."

My friends across the way smile. Even the Leader of the Opposition in London last fall, according to the London Free Press, admitted that on a number of policy issues he was fuzzy and felt there would have to be an end of the fuzz and a greater degree of focus. That is from the London Free Press of not too many months ago.

Where do they stand on the critical issues of our day? Where do they stand on issues such as health care, the environment, insurance, education? It depends on the day and it depends on the spokesperson. But it is interesting to understand how the dialectic is working today in the modern, Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario under the leadership of my friend, the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick.

The Leader of the Opposition said, as quoted in the Toronto Sun just last summer, the following: "Mr. Grossman added that it is his responsibility to balance the progressive and conservative wings of his party, and 'If you are not prepared to play off the Susan Fishes against the Bette Stephensons then you should not be leading this party.'"

What am I to make of that? The member for St. George (Ms. Fish) has resigned her position as the spokesman for the party on women's issues, and the member for York Mills (Miss Stephenson) has resigned altogether. I have heard of working both ends against the centre, but when that is the result—I ask you? And that, again, quoted in no less a journal than the Toronto Sun.

I thought it interesting that when the very distinguished member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies) was addressing the assembly today on this important issue, I counted at peak numbers, I think 16 of his caucus—now of about 48 or 50—who were here to listen to him.

That, of course, begs the question, "What is the real size of this caucus opposite?" There is a lot of election speculation. I am worried for the Leader of the Opposition, because at the rate his colleagues are retiring he will not have a quorum for caucus by the end of May. I am concerned that the list is now 13.

What, I say to my friends opposite, are the people of Ontario to make of this exodus? They might find some interest in rumours which abound that more are to come. In a recent comment in the *Toronto Star* the Leader of the Opposition indicated that he was not very disappointed that his colleagues were leaving in such numbers; and in fact it is suggested that the Leader of the Opposition would not even be disappointed if more of his colleagues were to leave.

I do not know what this is to suggest, except that I saw in the *Ottawa Citizen* the other day where my friend the member for Ottawa West said not to worry, the Tory party is just going through "the healthy process of traumatic renewal."

How can I say it any better than the distinguished outgoing member for Ottawa West, who may not be as outgoing as we first imagined? I do not know. I worry that so many of the members of that historic caucus opposite are flowing forth into other opportunities.

I was trying to imagine what it would have been like the other night at that York Mills executive meeting, where the very famous member for York Mills tendered her resignation, or indication that she would not be running again next time. When asked for her comments about the leader she said she would be silent; and the sounds of silence still resonate around this place.

1730

I have to look again at the performance of my friends opposite, because they aspire to their old places on this side. One imagines the citizenry of the province looking on and saying: "How well are they performing? Quite apart from the numbers who are taking their leave, what are we to make of the goings and comings in and around this place?"

For example, I look at my friend the member for Scarborough Centre who is coming and going more on the streets of Scarborough Centre than he is in the Legislature these days. I have to say to him that he will get over the disappointment of having been shuffled out of his previous responsibility as shadow minister for Education. He need not worry, because there are a lot of other

movements around and about the opposition caucus.

I thought I would never live to see the day when the Ontario Chamber of Commerce would be forced to attack publicly the leader of an Ontario Conservative party. If the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick has nothing done else that is historic, that record of having made the Ontario Chamber of Commerce attack the Ontario Conservative caucus, and over daddy's pension no less, is an achievement that I believe will stand the test of time.

I have had some difficulties in recent times with my friend the Leader of the Opposition, because he has been making some very serious allegations about data and statistics. I think, "Well, who am I?" I try to stand by the statistics I offer and protect my public servants from charges that I sometimes do not think are very well made in this place; but I am in good company, I am with the chamber of commerce. I am even with the member for Carleton-Grenville (Mr. Sterling).

Mr. Speaker, do you remember last year when our good friend the squire of Manotick had to stand up some place in this building and publicly dissociate himself from words that were put out in his name by Tory research? The poor member from Manotick had to do that. You have the Minister of Education saying that the poor Leader of the Opposition has his data all wrong on capital grants. You have the chamber of commerce saying: "No, leader; you have daddy's pension all mixed up. It is not that way." It is probably not even a pension. You have the member for Manotick having to say publicly, "I dissociate myself from Tory research." I say to the Treasurer that we might look at those budgets and see that perhaps they are not receiving enough research funding when the member from Manotick has to stand up publicly and say: "No, it is not so. The release may have been issued but it is not so."

Then of course, to the delight of us all, there are the opposition economics. Not since Major Douglas posited his famous A plus B equals C Social Credit economics in the mid-1930s has anyone done it with such alacrity and panache as has the Leader of the Opposition, a former Treasurer. Cut taxes, increase transfer payments and cut the deficit; things, of course, that he was not at all prepared to do when he was Treasurer. I tell the members that the Socreds of the 1930s would be truly proud of that view of economic theory.

I say to my friend the Minister of the Environment, the member for St. Catharines, is it any wonder the member for York Mills quit? Is it any wonder the member for Muskoka (Mr. F. S. Miller) has walked away? Is it any wonder the member for Don Mills (Mr. Timbrell) has gone to greener pastures? It is because these very distinguished and reputable leaders of a previous Tory government in Ontario can count. They know. They understand the realities of real economics. I say to my friend the member for Scarborough Centre that the kind of legerdemain in which the Leader of the Opposition has been engaging embarrasses the true blue Tories across the way. I see that my friend the member for Lincoln (Mr. Andrewes) is empurpled with nervous tension, if not embarrassment, himself.

The concern we all have is that this once-great party not fall to too ridiculous a level in this important debate, because even my Tory relatives are telling me at family gatherings: "This is very embarrassing. We believe there is a historic conservatism in this province. Whither does the member for St. Andrew-St. Patrick purport to take us?" I say, "Well, you will have to talk to others." My friend the member for Perth (Mr. Edighoffer) might help, because I know these have been trying times for him as well.

What are we to make of all the talk about the election? The members all noted, of course, that the Leader of the Opposition, or I should say some of his staff, called the provincial election last week. I do not know whether the Premier noticed that. I went home on the weekend and there was great excitement in the Ottawa Valley because the Leader of the Opposition had called the election. I said: "It is sort of like his cabinet shuffles. He has had four or five of those in the past eight or 10 months."

I know it is tough, I say to my friend the Leader of the Opposition, but hallucination is no substitute for the hard work that awaits him in the coming weeks and months. It might sometimes be an attractive prospect, getting out there on the outer ring of Saturn, but I do not think it is really going to impress his stalwart supporters and the great Tories we still have in much of my part of the province.

Then of course there is the election. We called it last week. Of course, it depends on the day of the week. Some days the Leader of the Opposition says: "They can govern for four years. I think they should govern for four years." How many times has my friend from Wingham heard that? "Four years, absolutely. There is no reason why they should not govern for four years."

I note today that the traditional amendment to the address has certainly not been moved by my friends opposite, so I read certain things into that. Then, other days of the week, it is time to throw the rascals out. It is hard to know, I say to my friend the member for Durham-York (Mr. Stevenson), exactly on which wavelength his leader is broadcasting.

Then there is the activity in the House. I know my friend the member for Nipissing is enjoying his time as House leader. He has taken his colleagues through quite some callisthenics in recent weeks. I will not comment upon the efficacy. I know the chair has had some interesting rulings about some of what has been engaged in, but it is certainly interesting watching our friends opposite as they travel.

I was reading something the other day. It quite distressed me actually to read that the Leader of the Opposition had gone to a Tory gathering in Essex-Windsor. One can fantasize what that must be like. This was the lead in the Windsor Star, "Somebody should do Conservative leader Larry Grossman a favour and mail him the pet ads from Monday's Windsor Star." He goes on to suggest that might be a good place to find candidates. I have said a lot in my time but I have never said that about the candidate recruitment in which the Leader of the Opposition has been engaged.

It goes on to say, quite properly, that when one looks at what my friends from Windsor, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Wrye), the member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. Newman) and the member for Essex South (Mr. Mancini), have done in terms of the chronic hospital and a variety of other long-sought-after concerns in the Essex-Windsor area, "Who could possibly imagine voting for anything but that kind of commitment and that kind of result?"

I know the time is quickly going. The other day I was sitting at home reading the Ottawa Citizen. I always read the Ottawa Citizen because I find it is quite an interesting journal. There was an article in the Ottawa Citizen the other day, not the one where it was reported that a vice-president of the Leeds Conservative association said following some Conservative incumbents was like "following lemmings to the sea." It was not that particular quote.

The Ottawa Citizen of May 6, 1987, reported that the Tories had a big political think tank getting ready for the next election. My friend the member for Ottawa Centre (Ms. Gigantes) will want me to read this. "Heads up, unsuspecting Liberals and New Democrats, the Tory flying

wedge is coming at you.” The provincial Tories announced the creation of a regional special weapons and tactical team under the leadership of the member from Manotick to lead the Tory charge in eastern Ontario in the next campaign.

Wait till I tell members what this SWAT team, the flying wedge, is going to be capable of doing. I quote from the article: “In a party brochure, the team members, the flying wedge, are said to ‘be ready to come together at a moment’s notice.’ One evening they might be attending an all-candidates meeting in Carleton East and the next night they can be in Ottawa West.” At that rate, they will make Pembroke by Christmas.

1740

Join with me in fantasizing, I say to my friend the member for Ottawa Centre, about the Tory flying wedge—the member for Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (Mr. Villeneuve), the member for Carleton-Grenville and the member for Ottawa West—flying into action. Has the Big Blue Machine come to this? I say to my friend the Leader of the Opposition, I do not think a flying wedge, in the final analysis, will be anything but a boomerang to embarrass, but I look forward to the wedge coming like Halley’s comet across the Ottawa Valley sky.

I should not say this, but I worry for my friend the Leader of the Opposition. Some of his very good friends are seated to his immediate left, the member for Brantford and the member for Lincoln. When the member for Brantford and the member for Lincoln, front benchers, have big events in Brantford and Beamsville, do they invite the leader of the Conservative Party? No, according to the Brantford Expositor, which reports on the leadership future of the member for Brantford. Bill Davis of Brampton is invited to both Beamsville and Brantford. What are we to make of that? If nothing else, the member for Muskoka must chuckle.

At any rate, I want to say that whenever that time and opportunity presents itself, we in this government and in this party are going to be delighted to meet our friends, particularly in the official opposition, however many might be left—and it could be a corporal’s guard so microscopic as to be almost unseen—to engage the debate and stand on the record. It is a record of achievement, a record of action and a record that I believe will recommend itself to the people of the province as it did to the people of York East but a year ago; a record that indicates clearly that this government has quite an identity beyond the narrow confines imagined by the leader of the third party. It is a record in health care, banning

extra billing and a substantial long-term commitment to capital funding of our health care community; an assured housing initiative undertaken by my friend the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling); the outstanding leadership in the environment provided by the member for St. Catharines (Mr. Bradley); education; and economic growth and development.

Think about northern initiatives, for example. While the member for Cochrane South could not move two jobs in the mines department—rope testing, I think it was—while he could not move two jobs, with his friend the member for Sudbury (Mr. Gordon), to Cochrane or elsewhere in the region, in the space of two years we have moved to the north about 1,200 positions with an annual payroll of about \$40 million. We have created the heritage fund. We have northern development councils and a variety of other very important initiatives. My friend the Minister of Financial Institutions is taking a tough leadership position on auto insurance. There is of course much more than I could enumerate this afternoon.

We have the speech from the throne with its focus on excellence in education, on improved quality of life, particularly for the disabled and for seniors in the province, and on economic equity for families, women, the north and the east.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I am not embarrassed that this government in its first two years has done things for Renfrew county that the previous government could not even imagine. I am not embarrassed about that, nor is my friend the member for Lanark (Mr. Wiseman) embarrassed at all. We are proud that this government is recognizing some of the legitimate aspirations of that important region in the eastern part of this province.

It is not just a matter of record. It is not just a matter of an agenda for the future. It is, perhaps most important, a matter of leadership. I want to say to my friends in this assembly that we on this side are privileged to have leadership of both style and substance. I say to my friends opposite that if they did not like the speech from the throne, if they found it a bit boring, they might enjoy Saturday Night.

Leadership of vision and vigour; leadership that is open and accessible; leadership that is performed very, very well, whether it is in the farm community of southwestern Ontario or on the national stage at Meech Lake or in Victoria—I say to my friends in this assembly what I will proudly say to the people of Ontario whenever

we are honoured with that consultation: we on this side are honoured with outstanding leadership in the great tradition of Mowat, Robarts and Davis and we will be proud to take that record under this leadership.

That is why I am not worried at all that the motion which stands unamended in the name of my friend the member for York East, seconded by my colleague the member for Kent-Elgin, will win the day this afternoon, as this Premier and his record will win the day whenever that comes in the future.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

On Thursday, April 30, Ms. Hart moved, seconded by Mr. McGuigan, that an humble address be presented to the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

"To the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada, Knight of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, one of Her Majesty's counsel learned in the law, bachelor of arts, doctor of laws, colonel of Her Majesty's armed forces supplementary reserve, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

"We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg leave to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us."

1800

The House divided on Ms. Hart's motion, which was agreed to on the following vote:

Ayes

Allen, Bossy, Bradley, Breagh, Bryden, Callahan, Caplan, Charlton, Conway, Cooke, D. R., Cooke, D. S., Cordiano, Curling, Eakins, Elston, Epp, Ferraro, Fontaine, Foulds, Fulton,

Gigantes, Grande, Grandmaître, Grier, Haggerty, Hart, Hayes, Henderson, Kerrio, Keyes, Knight;

Laughren, Lupusella, Mackenzie, Martel, McClellan, McGuigan, McKessock, Miller, G. I., Morin, Morin-Strom, Munro, Newman, Nixon, O'Neil, Offer, Peterson, Philip, Poirier, Polsinelli, Pouliot, Reville, Reycraft, Riddell, Ruprecht, Smith, D. W., Smith, E. J., Sorbara, South, Swart, Sweeney, Van Horne, Ward, Warner, Wildman, Wrye.

Nays

Andrewes, Ashe, Baetz, Bennett, Cousens, Cureatz, Davis, Dean, Eves, Fish, Gillies, Gordon, Gregory, Grossman, Guindon, Harris, Hennessy, Jackson, Johnson, J. M., Leluk, McFadden, McLean, McNeil, O'Connor, Partington, Pierce, Pollock, Rowe, Runciman, Sheppard, Shymko, Sterling, Stevenson, K. R., Taylor, Treleaven, Wiseman.

Ayes 66; nays 36.

Resolved: That an humble address be presented to the Honourable Lieutenant Governor of Ontario as follows:

To the Honourable Lincoln M. Alexander, a member of her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada, Knight of Grace of the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, one of Her Majesty's Counsel, learned in the law, bachelor or arts, doctor of laws, colonel in Her Majesty's armed forces supplementary reserve, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario:

We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Ontario, now assembled, beg to thank Your Honour for the gracious speech Your Honour has addressed to us.

The House adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

ERRATA

No.	Page	Column	Line	Should read:
11	507	1	39	and individuals have no control removed. It seems to me that this is the essence of the thrust in the throne speech on both health care and social services.
11	507	2	41	nation, which we have been fighting against for so many years.

APPENDIX

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS IN ORDERS AND NOTICES

POLICE PURSUITS

28. Mr. Sterling: Would the Solicitor General provide the following information for Ontario for the years 1983, 1984, 1985 and 1986: the number of fatalities resulting from police chases involving automobiles; the number of injuries sustained from police chases involving automobiles; the offence being investigated at the time of each police chase involving automobiles. [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Keyes: The information requested regarding police pursuits for the year 1986 is as follows:

Number of fatalities resulting from or immediately following police pursuits, four; number of injuries resulting from police pursuits, 191.

Reasons given for commencing pursuit: careless or dangerous driving, 109; impaired driving, 160; stolen vehicle, 99; suspect serious criminal offence, 43; leaving the scene of an accident, 12; break and enter, 11; wanted person, nine; suspended driver, 17; fail to obey police/fail to stop for police, 119; disobey traffic signal/sign, 65; speeding, 377; other (i.e., Highway Traffic Act infraction, infractions involving off-road vehicles, invalid sticker, unnecessary noise, no lights, etc.), 171.

FIRST MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

64. Mr. Guindon: Would the Premier provide a complete list of all ministers and staff, including parliamentary assistants, who accompanied him to the first ministers' conference in Vancouver; a complete itinerary for all participants; a detailed cost breakdown of trip, including accommodation, food, entertainment, travel, all meetings, participants and results? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Peterson: In addition to the Premier, the following ministers and staff were in attendance at the first ministers' conference in Vancouver: Hon. Mr. O'Neil, Hon. Mr. Riddell, Hon. Mr. Scott, C. Birchall, J. Brady, V. Borg, R. Carman, G. Coté, H. Ezrin, A. Golombek, D. Kirkpatrick, R. Latimer, P. Lavelle, M. Maxwell, M. Mogford, G. Posen, B. Smith, D. Stevenson, A. Szende and E. Todres.

Dates of trip: November 20-21, 1986. City of departure: Toronto, Ontario. Destination: Vancouver, BC.

Conference costs: In addition to the Premier, the costs were as follows: accommodation (includes hotel room rentals and delegation room rentals), \$6,407.25; meals for Ontario delegates and hospitality offered to members of other delegations, \$3,920.79; entertainment, nil; travel (includes air fare and other travel-related expenses), \$20,180.55; other (includes allowable incidental expenses and delegation service costs), \$1,939.84.

In addition to the ministers and staff in attendance, there were six observers invited from the Ontario private sector. The costs for four of these observers were paid for by their respective organizations. Two of the observers, L. Avedon and G. Kenney-Wallace, had their costs paid for by the government, and these costs were as follows: accommodation, \$481.50; meals, \$46.92; travel, \$2,195.76; other, \$68.52.

Participants' itinerary: The Ontario participants attended the official conference meetings (see attached agenda) and other conference-related meetings. There is no cost to Ontario for the conference meetings, and the delegates' costs for conference-related meetings are included in the above figures.

Results: Ontario used the opportunity afforded by the annual first ministers' conference to press for adoption of Ontario's views on national issues (e.g., softwood lumber), work constructively with other governments to deal with challenges facing Canada (e.g., in the development of a national strategy on science and technology), seek areas of consensus with other governments (e.g., in the areas of agriculture and fisheries) and in areas where Ontario is a leader, share the results of the province's initiatives with other governments (e.g., women's issues).

Agenda, Annual Conference of First Ministers, Vancouver, BC, November 20-21, 1986: (1) review of the state of the federation and the economy; (2) economic development; (3) economic equality for women.

SALE OF BEER AND WINE

70. Mr. Runciman: Would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology table any studies, legal opinions or legal precedents regarding international or national trade implications conducted by or given to the government with specific regard to the possible sale of

Ontario-produced beer and wine in local convenience stores since May 27, 1986? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The proposed amendment to the Liquor Licence Act would have made it possible to retail beer and wine through convenience stores. In the light of the defeat by the House of the proposed amendment, interest in the issue is purely hypothetical.

Neither I nor my colleague the Attorney General (Mr. Scott) feel that it is appropriate to speculate on the implications of passage of the proposed amendment either directly or indirectly.

SPILLS BILL

108. Mr. Harris: Would the Minister of the Environment table a list of all individuals and firms, and their addresses, which have filed claims under the provision of part IX of the Environmental Protection Act (spills bill) since May 16, 1986? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The Ministry of the Environment is not at liberty to provide the names and addresses of the individuals and firms who have contacted the Environmental Compensation Corp. Section 106 of the Environmental Protection Act requires the ECC to preserve confidentiality with respect to all matters except in relation to the administration of the act or with the consent of those to whom the information relates. Without this consent, the ECC cannot provide information concerning specific details, such as individual names, addresses or claim details.

GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

113. Mr. Villeneuve: Would the acting Minister of Government Services provide a list of all properties currently leased in Metropolitan Toronto, indicating the per square foot cost for such leased space, the lessor and the respective leases entered into or terminated since July 26, 1985? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 55.

114. Mr. Villeneuve: Would the acting Minister of Government Services provide a list of all properties owned in Metropolitan Toronto by the provincial government, as well as an indication of all property acquired or disposed of since June 26, 1985, indicating the vendor and buyer, respectively? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 58.

115. Mr. Villeneuve: Would the acting Minister of Government Services, with respect to

the leasing of the property at 10 Wellesley Street East, table all correspondence and documentation since June 26, 1985, between the government and Rank City Wall Canada Ltd., Hammer-son Canada Inc. and Ottawa Commercial Realities, the latter firm being owned and operated by Samuel and Robert Berger? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

See sessional paper 59.

WATER QUALITY

118. Mr. Runciman: Would the Minister of Health advise the House why his ministry has not undertaken to conduct a health study into the quality of the drinking water in the township of Elizabethtown? Since the only action taken by the ministry was to install water filters when the residents believe that the substandard quality of drinking water is the cause of their ailments, including cysts and rashes, would the ministry advise if there is a connection to be drawn from the nearby MacDougall liquid waste disposal site? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Elston: The Ministry of Health has not supported the proposal to conduct a health study in Elizabethtown township because there has never been evidence of drinking water contamination from the MacDougall waste disposal site. The Ministry of the Environment has monitored the drinking water of homes surrounding the site on a monthly basis for many years and no contamination has been detected. All the domestic drinking water supplies have met Ontario drinking water objectives.

Approximately three years ago, some of the test wells dug immediately adjacent to the disposal site demonstrated some contamination. While none of the home drinking water wells showed contamination, bottled water was supplied to these homes by the MOE merely as a precaution. Bottled water was supplied for two and a half years until activated carbon water filters were installed in the homes. Ongoing monitoring has still not identified any contamination.

Based on the MOE's data indicating no contamination of drinking water has ever been evident, and the fact that residents had received bottled water for over two years, there is no scientific basis for a health study to assess the landfill site as a possible cause of any health effects.

FRENCH-LANGUAGE SERVICES

122. Mr. Cousens: Will the minister responsible for francophone affairs table the following

information: (1) How much did it cost for French-language services in 1983-84 and 1984-85; (2) how much is it expected to cost for French-language services in 1985-86, 1986-87 and 1987-88? How much of the costs in each of these fiscal years is because of Bill 8? [Tabled April 29, 1987]

Hon. Mr. Grandmaître: 1. In the past, ministries have not been requested to outline, in their estimates, the costs involved in providing their services in French. The delivery of French-language services was mostly incorporated into the ministry's overall resource requirements. Reliable information on the additional costs incurred by the Ontario government to deliver services in French in 1983-84 is therefore not available.

2. A comprehensive implementation procedure has been devised for use by all ministries and agencies affected by Bill 8. Under this procedure, estimates of resources required for the three-year implementation period should be provided by June 1987. These estimates will then be evaluated by the office of francophone affairs and Management Board of Cabinet, with input from the human resources secretariat and the Ontario French Language Services Commission.

When this process has been completed, I will be in a position to provide precise resource requirements for the first year of implementation of the act and estimates of projected costs for the second and third years of implementation.

BOOTH AT FRANKFURT FAIR

125. Mr. McFadden: Would the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology provide the number of staff manning the Ontario government booth at the Frankfurt Fair in February 1987; the cost of travel and accommodation for the booth staff and any related staff; the purpose of the booth; the booth's hours of operation; and whether it is usual procedure to leave the booth unmanned, with no note of explanation, as reported by a travelling Ontarian? [Tabled April 30, 1987]

Hon. Mr. O'Neil: The booth mentioned was not an Ontario government booth but rather one organized and run by the federal government. Therefore, no Ontario staff were involved.

No travel costs; no accommodation; hours of operation unknown.

INTERIM ANSWERS

2. Mr. Philip: Hon. Mr. Kwinter—I have referred this inquiry to J. W. Ackroyd, chairman of the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. He has

advised me the information must come from several departments of the board and therefore a final answer will not be available until June 15, 1987.

3. Mr. Cousens: Hon. Mr. Sweeney—Additional time is required by the Ministry of Community and Social Services to prepare the response to this question. The answer will be forthcoming on or about June 8, 1987.

6. Mr. Mitchell: Hon. Mr. Kerrio—Additional time will be required to respond to this question. The response will be available on or about June 30, 1987.

10. Mr. Sterling: Hon. Mr. Eakins—The information requested will require considerable time by each ministry to complete and forward to the Advertising Review Board office, where the information will be co-ordinated. The answers and supporting material will be forthcoming at or about the week of June 29, 1987.

11. Mr. Sterling: Hon. Mr. Scott—The Ministry of the Attorney General will require additional time to respond to this question. A final response will be tabled on or about July 13, 1987.

12. Mr. Mitchell: Hon. Mr. Kerrio—Additional time will be required to respond to this question. The response will be available on or about June 30, 1987.

13. Mr. Mitchell: Hon. Mr. Kerrio—Additional time will be required to respond to this question. The response will be available on or about June 30, 1987.

25. Mr. McCague: Hon. Mr. Keyes—Additional time will be required to respond to this question. An answer will be provided on or about July 31, 1987.

26. Miss Stephenson: Hon. Mr. Nixon—As the costing information relating to trips taken in April would not be available until late May or early June, and allowing time for the additional information to be assembled, the answer should be available by about June 29, 1987.

27. Mr. Wiseman: Hon. Mr. Nixon—The normal period of 14 days will be insufficient to provide the information required to answer this question. The answer should be available on or about July 15, 1987.

65. Mr. Ashe: Hon. Mr. Peterson—Details of the costs of functions held in April would not be available until late May or early June, and allowing time for the additional information to be assembled, the answer should be available by about June 29, 1987.

66. Mr. Bernier: Hon. Mr. Nixon—As the costing information relating to trips taken in April would not be available until late May or early June, and allowing time for the additional information to be assembled, the answer should be available by about July 9, 1987.

71. Mr. Shymko: Hon. Mr. Nixon—Due to the amount of information requested and the fact that the costs incurred in travel during April will not be known until late May or early June, the answer would not be available before July 23, 1987.

72. Miss Stephenson: Hon. Mr. Nixon—As the costing information relating to trips taken in April would not be available until late May or early June, and allowing time for the additional information to be assembled, the answer should be available by about July 9, 1987.

73. Mr. McCague: Hon. Mr. Keyes—Additional time will be required to respond to this question. An answer will be provided on or about July 31, 1987.

106. Mr. Runciman: Hon. Mr. Conway—The ministry requires additional time to provide the information required by this question. The answer should be available on or about July 27, 1987.

107. Mr. Harris: Hon. Mr. Bradley—The ministry requires additional time to answer the above question. Our answer will be available on or before June 8, 1987.

111. Mr. Barlow: Hon. Mr. Conway—The ministry requires additional time to provide the information required by this question. The answer should be available on or about July 27, 1987.

124. Mr. Allen: Hon. Mr. Conway—Additional time is required to answer this question. An answer will be forthcoming on or before June 8, 1987.

126. Mr. Wildman: Hon. Mr. Nixon—The detail required by this question will necessitate an in-depth review of ministry records. Accordingly, the information cannot be provided within the normal 14 days. An answer should be available approximately June 15, 1987.

127. Mr. Bennett: Hon. Mr. Scott—The Ministry of the Attorney General will require additional time to respond to this question. A final response will be tabled on or about June 30, 1987.

RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

NATUROPATHY

Sessional paper 21, re naturopathy.

Hon. Mr. Elston: The regulation of the health professions is currently being examined by the Health Professions Legislation Review.

The review developed nine criteria, all of which must be met to justify statutory regulation of a profession. The purpose of regulation is not to confer status on professional groups or to pass judgement on their professional contribution to health care. The fundamental issue has been to determine which health care professions require statutory regulation in order to protect the public interest.

On April 3, 1986, it was announced that when the planned new regulatory structure for the health professions is implemented it will not include naturopaths.

The principal reason for this decision is that naturopathy is based on the philosophy of natural healing that makes it extremely difficult to define standards of practice. As a result, the continued regulation of naturopaths would not enhance protection of the public because there is no basis for the development and enforcement of standards of practice.

Until the new regulatory structure is implemented, naturopaths will continue to practise under their current governing body. Once the new legislation is in place, naturopaths will practice as an unregulated profession.

DIALYSIS UNIT

Sessional paper 22, re the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital.

Hon. Mr. Elston: Scarborough General Hospital submitted a proposal to Metropolitan Toronto District Health Council in 1985 for a 10-bed dialysis unit encompassing the whole range of dialysis services at an annual operating cost of \$3.2 million.

The Scarborough General Hospital's proposal for a renal program was not reviewed by the DHC committee responsible for ranking new and expanded health programs in 1985 because life support programs were excluded from consideration and Scarborough General Hospital's proposal was not consistent with the overall plan for Metropolitan Toronto, as described in the Metropolitan Toronto DHC report on end stage renal disease.

In early 1987, the hospital submitted its master plan/functional program to the DHC and the ministry for review. The plan included a renal dialysis program as part of a proposed redevelopment.

On April 7, 1987, the Metropolitan Toronto DHC responded to Scarborough General Hospi-

tal's master plan/functional program. The DHC indicated it does not identify a need for hospital-based dialysis programs in the eastern section of Metropolitan Toronto at the present time. The DHC therefore does not support Scarborough General's proposal for a dialysis unit. However, the DHC indicated it will continue forwarding data from the dialysis registry to assist the hospital in assessing any future need for such a service.

In a related development, three DHCs—Durham region; Haliburton, Kawartha and Pine Ridge; and county of Simcoe—are currently assessing dialysis need in areas to the north and east of Metropolitan Toronto. The DHCs are examining data regarding patients who currently travel to either downtown Toronto or Kingston for renal dialysis services and who would utilize services in another location closer to home if available.

TEST FLIGHTS

Sessional paper 31, re low-level flights of B-52 jet bombers and F-111 jet fighters.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The Ministry of the Environment has no legislative mechanism which mandates it to approve, review or evaluate proposed or existing flight routes involving private, commercial or military aircraft. The approval of flight routes is within federal jurisdiction and is the sole responsibility of Transport Canada under the authority of the Aeronautics Act. The petition should be forwarded to the appropriate federal agencies for action.

INTERIM RESPONSE

Sessional paper 20, re Bill 80.

Hon. Mr. Conway: Additional time is required to respond to the above petition. An answer will be forthcoming on or before June 26, 1987.

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Breauth, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
Cousens, W. D. (York Centre PC)
Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
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Ferraro, R. E. (Wellington South L)
Fish, S. A. (St. George PC)
Foulds, J. F. (Port Arthur NDP)
Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
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Grande, T. (Oakwood NDP)
Grandmaître, Hon. B. C., Minister of Municipal Affairs (Ottawa East L)
Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
Grossman, L. S. (St. Andrew-St. Patrick PC)
Harris, M. D. (Nipissing PC)
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Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
Laughren, F. (Nickel Belt NDP)
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Miller, G. I. (Haldimand-Norfolk L)
Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)
Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)
O'Connor, T. P. (Oakville PC)
O'Neil, Hon. H. P., Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Quinte L)
Partington, P. (Brock PC)
Rae, R. K. (York South NDP)
Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)
Rowe, W. E. (Simcoe Centre PC)
Scott, Hon. I. G., Attorney General (St. David L)
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Treleaven, R. L., Deputy Speaker and Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House (Oxford PC)
Van Horne, Hon. R. G., Minister without Portfolio (London North L)
Wiseman, D. J. (Lanark PC)





Hansard

Official Report of Debates

Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Third Session, 33rd Parliament

Wednesday, May 20, 1987

Speaker: Honourable H. A. Edighoffer

Clerk of the House: C. L. DesRosiers

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Wednesday, May 20, 1987

The House met at 1:32 p.m.

Prayers.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

Mr. Dean: I would like to take this opportunity to draw to the House's attention the strength of women's hockey leagues in Ontario. In the recent first women's world hockey tournament, which was hosted by the Ontario Women's Hockey Association, Ontario hockey teams took both the gold and silver medals. This strong showing clearly confirms the view that women's hockey in Ontario is more highly developed than in any other part of Canada or the world.

I am particularly pleased to point out that the gold-medal winners were from Hamilton, the Hamilton Golden Hawks. I would also like to tell the members that one evening last week, I presented provincial certificates to the Saltfleet Women's Hockey Peewees from Stoney Creek, who are the provincial peewee B champions this season.

I congratulate not only the Hamilton Golden Hawks and the Saltfleet Peewees but also all women's hockey teams in Ontario for the hard work of the players and their leaders and, dare I say it, for the world-class excellence they have achieved.

SAULT STE. MARIE ANNIVERSARY

Mr. Morin-Strom: This year, Sault Ste. Marie is celebrating its 75th anniversary as a city. Throughout the year, our community is commemorating this diamond anniversary with many special events planned. With summer approaching and many families now planning vacations, I would like to invite people from across the province to come and enjoy the friendly hospitality we offer them in Sault Ste. Marie.

As the oldest community in Ontario, Sault Ste. Marie is the historic trading centre of the upper Great Lakes. We have the Lake Superior cottage country on one side and the delightful North Shore of Georgian Bay on the other. Our American friends are right across the international bridge, while both the Trans-Canada Highway and the Agawa tour train head north into the

scenic beauty that enthralled the Group of Seven in Algoma country.

On behalf of all northern Ontario members, I want to send a special invitation to residents of southern Ontario to come north this summer. Explore the boundless beauty of our northern Ontario wilderness playground. There is so much to do and so many friendly folks to welcome you, and nowhere more so than the northern centre of it all this summer, Sault Ste. Marie.

BENEFIT AUCTION

Mr. Reycraft: I want to draw to the attention of the Legislature a very splendid example of the strong sense of community that thrives in Middlesex county and indeed throughout rural Ontario.

Paul Grose is a young farmer in London township who suffered a very severe disabling injury just a few months ago. Paul was injured when a large, round, hay bale fell from the front-end loader of his tractor and rolled over both tractor and driver. Paul's injury, which resulted from the accident, has left him paralysed from the waist down and obviously unable to carry out his normal duties on the farm. The people of London township recently organized a benefit auction for Paul and his family. The auction was held last month and the sale of goods and services, all of which were donated, provided a return of some \$24,000. Since then, a benefit dance and a canvass of residences and farms have added over \$30,000 more to the benefit fund.

With us today in the members' gallery are two guests of mine who participated in that auction, Heather Lang and Stewart Thompson. They are examples of the fine, generous and compassionate people of Middlesex who have joined together to help a family that finds itself in very difficult circumstances.

I would also like to advise the Legislature that part of the benefit fund is being used to equip Paul Grose's tractor with an elevating device that will allow him to continue as an active farmer. No doubt his determination comes, in part, from the tremendous community support he has received.

SIDEWALK SAFETY

Mr. McFadden: Sidewalk safety has become an increasingly important concern for many seniors and for mothers with babies and young children. The Eglinton Seniors' Advisory Council, a body that I created over a year ago, has strongly urged the passage and enforcement of more effective legislation to deal with the unsafe and inconsiderate use of sidewalks by cyclists.

The position of the council has been supported by a petition signed by some 600 concerned citizens in north Toronto. The elderly and young children find it difficult to get out of the way of cyclists who are speeding down the sidewalks. Many accidents and near-accidents occur. A recent meeting of the Toronto city council supported the concerns raised by the Eglinton seniors' council and work has now begun on reviewing existing municipal bylaws.

But the effective enforcement of cycling safety will depend upon amendments to the Highway Traffic Act. The city of Toronto and the Toronto cycling committee have urged the provincial government to take several initiatives, including an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act to require cyclists to identify themselves to police where an offence has occurred. It is important that our sidewalks be safe for everyone to use. I would urge the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) to introduce amendments to the Highway Traffic Act to achieve this objective.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Mr. Allen: Freedom of information and the right to know have become a matter of great concern to this Legislature and yet one still encounters cases in this province where the government or its ministries are apparently unprepared to provide appropriate information to people affected.

I think, for example, of the case of the Canada Christian College in this city which, when I came to this Legislature, was seeking to find out why the government of that day was not prepared to provide it with reasons as to why it should not have the support of the government in securing degree-granting powers.

This appears to be the case again with this government. In March 1986, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities established a series of guidelines that were quite clear with respect to the financial facilities and community support required in order to undergird and recognize the degree-granting respectability of an institution of this kind.

Yet, in spite of the fact that the Canada Christian College appears to have met and exceeded all of those requirements, the ministry still refuses not only to support the initiative from the college to secure the degree-granting rights but also refuses to give the reasons it will not support that measure.

People in this province deserve to have reasons when they are going through due process with this government and it is time this ministry responded with the reasons.

1340

ABORTION SERVICES

Mr. Ashe: This morning I delivered to the legislative post office 124 envelopes, each addressed to one of the honourable members, on behalf of the Realwomen of Durham. It is a critique of the Marion Powell report on abortion services in Ontario.

I appreciate this is an issue that many members have strong feelings about on one side or the other, but knowing that all members would like to be aware of the other side of the issue, I think this is a very sincere and honest critique of that report, which I do not think anyone would suggest is a completely unbiased report.

I recommend it to the members. It is very brief and I hope all honourable members will read it—again I emphasize, regardless of which side of the issue they stand on.

TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. R. F. Johnston: I rise to discuss the question of the light rapid transit provisions in Scarborough inflicted upon our community by the past Progressive Conservative government. When all we really wanted was some rapid streetcars, we now have a major noise pollution problem in that community as a result of this LRT. I regret to inform the House that this government has been unable to deal with that issue any more than did the previous government.

On May 4 there was a meeting of Toronto Transit Commission members, the Urban Transportation Development Corp., government officials and community members in Treverton Park in my riding. As a result, nothing has been agreed upon as to a means of cutting down the noise. The noise is so extreme that it is keeping people awake late into the night. They are grinding the tracks after the regular hours of transportation end, so that there is a continued problem for the residents in that way as well.

There has been no move to bring in berms or some kind of acoustic protection for the residents of that community. It is about time there was. That track has now been in operation for several years and the planning was done long before that. These citizens need not be inconvenienced any longer.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

Mr. Sheppard: I would like to make a few comments on the perils of drinking and driving. On March 7, two constituents in my riding were killed when driving home after attending a party promoting a local fitness club. The tragedy lies in the fact that they left behind four small children between the ages of one and eight. The irony of the matter lies in the fact that a bumper sticker was found on the rear of the demolished car reading: "Arrive alive. If you drink, don't drive."

ORAL QUESTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Harris: It is interesting to note that the government has run out of ideas already, waiting for this great document to come later today.

I have a question for the Premier. Given that the Quebec New Democratic Party, Don Johnston, Pierre-Marc Johnson, Manitoba Liberals, Bourassa himself and others across this country are all experiencing some difficulty with the Meech Lake accord, why does the Premier continue to refuse to hold public hearings in Ontario on this most important constitutional subject?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: The authorities my honourable friend quotes are not necessarily of the same view on the subject. It has been a matter of wide public discussion, as well it should be. It is my intention to share the wording with the members of the House as it is developed and we hope we will have a discussion in this House.

I said before that we will have very full public debate on this matter before it is ratified and becomes part of our Constitution. I think that will allow all of us to express our views on the matter. I probably have more faith in the honourable member opposite than he has in himself. I think he is quite capable of standing up and expressing his views on the matter.

Mr. Harris: Here in Ontario, groups such as immigrant groups concerned about family unification, the day care coalition, native rights groups and those concerned with social assistance in this province and across this country are all concerned, and I suggest rightly so, as to how this accord will impact on future social and

economic policy development in this country. The Premier felt it was important to set up a select committee to tour the province for months to hear from the public on Sunday shopping. Why does he feel now that our nation's Constitution does not deserve the same consideration?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: As the member knows, that committee travelled at its own pace and its own speed. I gather it will have a report to the Legislature fairly soon.

As he knows, the formal meeting has been scheduled for June 2. That is not too long from now. I am hopeful we will have some kind of discussion in this House prior to that and the member will be entitled to put forward his views on the subject. I would be interested in knowing his views. I have discussed the matter with a number of groups. They know my views and surely the Legislature should be entitled to know the member's views as well.

Groups that are interested are expressing their points of view. Concerns have been raised or there are differences of interpretation. That is quite legitimate. My honourable friend will recall that when the Constitution was amended five and a half years ago, we had the same kind of discussions and people presented their points of view. There was not always unanimity, but Canada made a great leap forward five and a half years ago and I think it is about to do the same in a couple of weeks or so.

Mr. Harris: But the Premier does not want to hear from the people of Ontario.

I would like to get this straight. The Premier claimed in the *Toronto Star* that he was a major architect of this agreement. Is he suggesting that this agreement he was so proud of two weeks ago cannot stand the scrutiny of even one week of public hearings in Ontario? Is the Premier now backing off this wonderful agreement that he was so proud of two weeks ago?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not know where my honourable friend gets such strange interpretations of reality. Let me help him out, if I may. I do not claim to be an architect of this situation. All the Premiers went to play a constructive role. Great leadership was shown by the Prime Minister, and if the member has any concerns he may want to express them to him. Perhaps the Prime Minister does not listen to those people opposite, I have no idea, but if the member has views he may want to express them to him as well. Premier Bourassa obviously played a great leadership role, as did other people such as Premier Getty, of the same party as the member.

He may want to express any views he has on the matter to him.

The answer is no, I have not backed off in any way. As a matter of fact, I am still very supportive. I understand the concerns that are expressed but let me tell the member that a lot of those concerns are misplaced. I do not have the same fears others have. Granted, any time anyone commits anything to words, i.e. a Constitution, it will be subject to judicial interpretation at some point in the future, but I think we have kept the integrity of this country intact.

I believe we have allowed for some flexibility in our Confederation that recognizes the realities of our federation. It does not diminish power in any way and still allows the provinces and the federal government to work together in a co-operative way in a spirit of true, co-operative federalism.

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Jackson: I have a question for the Minister of Housing, the minister responsible for tenants and landlords in Ontario. I understand the backlog of rental applications under the minister's new bill now has reached 21,000, as reported by his office as of Friday, and that as of this week many of his rent review administrators have assembled in London, Ontario, for a three-day seminar to get briefed and trained on understanding and use of this new cost-revenue statement. Can the minister confirm that there are also landlords at this seminar? Is he planning other such publicly funded seminars so that landlords will learn and understand the new forms they now are required to fill out?

Hon. Mr. Curling: Yes, we are continuing to have seminars and workshops to acquaint tenants and landlords with the procedure.

1350

Mr. Jackson: That is a marked improvement from the response yesterday when the minister was unaware even if the forms had gone out.

In this copy of Rent Review News, the minister promised that one of the main features of his new act would be, and I will quote from his publication, "the creation of a streamlined rent review process designed to be accessible and to ensure consistency." That is what he promised.

Since it is taking his staff three days just to understand the one component of this legislation, which is in fact the cost-revenue statement, can he tell us if he now has been advised by his ministry staff that it will be his intention to conduct similar publicly funded seminars for

tenants across Ontario so that they are equally as equipped to be prepared in the event of a hearing or an appeal?

Hon. Mr. Curling: The honourable member is correct that the procedure in the past was rather ad hoc and not organized. In the sense that he talks about the cost-revenue statement, which is a very detailed form, a form that lists all the costs that would be involved in every increase or the running of a building, it also gives the landlord—not to continue as in the past where he would come running back and forth with receipts, which he had to do when the former government was in power—the chance to state all his costs. It also allows the tenant to review those costs, and not in a very ad hoc way, as I stated before.

Mr. Villeneuve: Forty-two years.

Hon. Mr. Curling: The member is right; for 42 years this inconsistency developed.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: It reached a state that, in recognition of that, we will be funding situations where people will be educated in that process with seminars and workshops. The honourable member raised in the House the matter of pamphlets to assist in that education; and we will continue to bring information to the landlords and tenants.

Mr. Jackson: The minister realizes this backlog is now up over 21,000. His ministry staff are even indicating that it could be up to a year before this backlog is cleared out. I want to give the minister one example by way of illustrating my question.

Fred Webster of Burlington is 71 years old. He currently pays 45 per cent of his total income towards rent. His landlord has requested a 33 per cent increase, which will bring his shelter costs to 67 per cent of his total income. He lives in a pre-1976 building, which means he will owe his landlord \$1,752 in back rent. He has had to take a part-time job—at age 71—in order to pay his rent.

Mr. Speaker: Your question is?

Mr. Jackson: He indicated that he had never imagined he would have to go back to work at his age in order to keep a roof over his head.

If the minister does not know when his hearings will be completed, can he please tell Mr. Webster and the thousands of Ontario tenants when the first rent review will be undertaken by his ministry? When will the first hearing take place?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I would advise my honourable friend that what Mr. Webster did not

have in the past was a comprehensive housing policy, which we put into place. What Mr. Webster did not have in the past was protection under a policy that excluded those tenants who were living in post-1975 buildings. What we can tell Mr. Webster is the case will be addressed.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Hon. Mr. Curling: We will also tell him that we have set up a Residential Rental Standards Board, which was not in place before. We are also addressing key money, which is now illegal. We have also protected tenants from being evicted from their residences, from demolition or eviction in any form.

Mr. Speaker, I am telling him we have—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Would the minister take his seat?

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Mr. Martel: I have a question of the Minister of Labour regarding Falconbridge's refusal to recognize the workers' right to choose their own representative to the health and safety committee.

The minister will know that subsection 8(5) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act says the following, "A committee shall consist of at least two persons, of whom at least half shall be workers who do not exercise managerial functions...."

The workers at Onaping have in fact elected their members to the shop and utilities health and safety committee. Falconbridge refuses to recognize those workers' rights to sit on the committee. The Minister of Labour issued an order on January 6, 1987, to allow the duly elected worker representatives to sit on the committee and that there should be compliance by February 9. Falconbridge did not comply, nor did it appeal. His ministry rewrote an order on March 25, 1987, and that has not been complied with.

Can the minister tell me why the order was repeated in the first place, since the minister says there are no repeat orders; and was there a special action request by his ministry, which is the initial step in a prosecution?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: The member has asked a very specific question about a problem which has occurred at Falconbridge. I know there have been some discussions. There have been some concerns raised with the ministry. I can indicate to the honourable member that the allegations have been investigated and that the matter has been referred to the legal branch of the ministry.

Mr. Martel: Since this matter has been going on for almost six months, with orders issued in January and March and the company has failed to comply, why did the minister send Ian Carruthers up there today to try to mediate the situation? Why has there been no prosecution, since these workers are without a worker rep on that committee and Falconbridge again had a worker killed just last week?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I regret that my friend seeks, quite inaccurately and unfortunately, to link the two. With all due respect to the member, I do not think the two incidents are linked, and I think the honourable member knows that. I think the honourable member knows that very well.

I can only say to the honourable member that the matter has been investigated and the matter has been referred to the legal branch. I can add and I can confirm that Mr. Carruthers' involvement in this matter has been undertaken. Mr. Carruthers is there. I was not aware he was going to be there today. I was aware he was going up there.

The advisory services are doing in this case exactly what they are supposed to be doing where the internal responsibility system between the parties on joint health and safety committees begins to break down, in this case between Falconbridge and the Sudbury Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union. Mr. Carruthers is there in an attempt to bring these matters back into a more positive light. That is a very proper role for the ministry to have. It is in no way contradictory to the enforcement role, which is also being carried out quite properly in this case.

Mr. Martel: First of all, there has been a repeat of the order, and the minister has stated in this House over and over again there are no repeat orders. So do not hand us the guff; I understand the system pretty well.

I have a supplementary regarding Kidd Creek, which, as the minister knows, is owned by Falconbridge nickel, this same wonderful company. Is the minister aware that on sites where health and safety committees were to be elected, management monitored and conducted the elections of the worker reps and did not advise the workers of their rights under the act?

Management stated that spare-shift bosses—and I just quoted a part of the act that said that was not tolerable—could run. One was in fact nominated to run for the worker rep on the committee. Finally, the company issued a directive which states, "We will also establish two divisional health and safety committees, one at each site, comprised of three management

representatives at the superintendent level and"—get this—"three employee representatives elected from the co-chairpersons of the committee on each location," which is contrary to the act.

Will the minister order and supervise a new election at Kidd Creek immediately? It is the same bloody company.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: My friend is going to have to meet with Bill James.

Mr. Martel: Jesse doesn't want to talk to me these days.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: Jesse does not want to talk to him.

I should not make light of this, because in the Kidd Creek example the member has raised a matter which, if the facts are as he has described them, is a matter of very real concern. Quite frankly, joint health and safety committees are not properly in place in any way, shape or form if workers do not have the entire right and responsibility in choosing the members of the joint health and safety committees.

I see the member is going to send over the information. I will be glad to receive it. I will look into the matter and get back to the member on this as quickly as possible.

1400

RENT REGULATION

Mr. Reville: I should like to put a question to the Minister of Housing about the due course of rent review. The minister has told us two contrary things. He says, "Rent review is working;" and he says, "Rent review is not working but it is not my fault." This is a bit confusing.

Using the minister's own confusing numbers where he says a rent review application might take between one and two hours, and using the 1,495 applications per administrator in Mississauga, will the minister tell the House whether he thinks it is good service to the tenants of Mississauga to have the last rent review applications there for 1985, 1986 and 1987 determined around July 15, 1988?

Hon. Mr. Curling: As a matter of fact, I do not understand the question of the honourable member. Each case is heard on its own merit, and if he wants me to say that all cases will be heard in two hours or one hour, I am not able to answer that question.

Mr. Reville: The minister talks about cases being heard on their own merits; tenants are worried that they are not going to be heard at all. In fact, there are 161 tenant families at 135

Marlee Avenue paying 30 per cent increases while waiting for the minister. There are 107 families at Millside Towers in Milton paying 15 per cent for last year and 10 per cent for this year, and they are waiting for the minister. There are 1,318 tenant families at Crescent Place all facing increases of 11 per cent. They cannot do any planning because there is no possible way they can figure out when the minister's system is going to begin to work. Will the minister stand up in the House and explain to us how he is going to deal with this flood of rent review applications in a timely fashion?

Hon. Mr. Curling: This same honourable gentleman standing in his place is the same honourable gentleman who was in the committee hearings and knew the process and understood the process full well. He knew that by March 2, 1987, we would have received all the applications. We are telling tenants to submit all their applications and from there on the process will work. At that time, he did not make one single amendment in committee in order to assist that, but today he stands up and says it is not working. He was there, he knew the process and he knew the time, and today he asks about the backlog.

Let me again state that whatever figure the members may raise, whether it is 18,000 in one day or 21,000 as the honourable the member for Burlington South (Mr. Jackson) has stated, many of those tenants would have no redress if we had not brought in Bill 51 to protect those tenants, and that is the fact. The situation is being monitored by me daily, and it will be looked after.

Mr. Reville: What I saw during the process was ministerial incompetence. The minister has had this legislation in place for five months and still we have no telephone in the rent registry. I want to congratulate the minister though. He managed to appoint the Residential Rental Standards Board yesterday.

Will the minister now tell the House when the standards board is going to develop its standard and begin to hear applications from tenants; and when a tenant in Ontario will be able to call a number and find out what the legal maximum rent is, as promised by him and to be in place by February 2, 1987?

Hon. Mr. Curling: I presume the question is, has the standards board been established and will it be operating? Yes, as the member said, it has been established. The appointments are there, with representation from tenant groups, landlord groups and inspector groups. The Association of

Municipalities of Ontario will also have representation there.

The member asked me, if I appoint them today, will a telephone be in that office? Definitely. The chairman of that standard board has her office in place and can be contacted at the ministry.

ACID RAIN

Mr. Gillies: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. I would like to ask the minister again about the rather absurd banking provision that allows Ontario Hydro a right to pollute the air, which no other source of emissions has.

The question is simply this: we know there is a fight going on between Hydro and himself on this matter. Every environmental group in the province would like to know: who is the Premier (Mr. Peterson) backing this time, the minister or Tom Campbell?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: First of all, I have to point out the nonexistent acid rain abatement program that was in effect before this government came in. That is first. I know the member for Brantford would have been disappointed if I did not point that out.

He will recall that in the last election campaign we promised that there would be a comprehensive acid rain abatement program introduced within six months. Within six months we introduced it. It was hailed in Canada and the United States as the toughest, best acid rain program that existed anywhere in North America, perhaps anywhere in the world.

The member will recall that one of the provisions that was not finally determined and that was going to be determined was, if there was a banking provision, how much could be withdrawn at a later date if Hydro was, indeed, well below its regulated emission level.

Mr. Stevenson: Rain drops are falling through your head.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: I will not say that. It would be too unkind, because I may reach that stage some day. I will not say that. To the member for Durham-York, I am sorry.

I want to say to the member, as I did in the House the other day—and he is wrong if he thinks people fight and battle. We have good discussions on this side of the House all the time. He will find that we have a group of cabinet ministers and officials in public who like to comprehensively discuss these matters. We have taken into consideration the viewpoints expressed by all members of the select committee

on the environment, and in due course I will be making a determination as to how we will treat that.

Mr. Gillies: As usual, I enjoyed the minister's speech. I know he would be disappointed if I did not mention that Inco's emissions were at their peak, two million tonnes, and that his predecessors reduced them to 700,000 tonnes. If he had done half as well with Inco, they would now be at zero.

But that is Inco; let us talk about Ontario Hydro. The minister has not answered the question. Is he going to remove this regulation before an election or is he going to let it languish? Will he also tell the House what Hydro refused to tell the select committee? What steps is it going to take and what option is it going to exercise after that provision is removed to ensure that our citizens have an uninterrupted supply of energy and that, in fact, they will not be subjected to brownouts or insufficiencies of supply because the minister finally has the guts to make it adhere to the emissions standards that he himself set?

1410

Hon. Mr. Bradley: It is interesting to see how the opposition wants it both ways. One half of the question deals with whether we can prevent brownouts, while the other half deals with acid rain reduction. It is a contradiction, is it not?

I must say that when the member's party was in power, Inco wrote its own ticket as far as acid rain was concerned. In the preamble to the question the member indicated differently. It changed when we came to office: the regulations were not held down.

The member asked a specific question. He knows how I like to give direct and specific answers to his questions. I can assure him that I have looked very carefully at the recommendations of the committee, which included members of the Liberal caucus and other parties of this House. I am in the process of discussing this with my colleagues. I know the member opposite would want to know all the ramifications of any changes that could be made in terms of cost, brownouts and so on. When I have gathered all this information together I will be making a suitable announcement as a reaction to the committee report. I believe, as always, the people of Ontario will be pleased with that result.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I would remind members that sometimes when they ask long questions they get long answers, and sometimes it works the other way.

AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE

Mr. Swart: I have a question of the Minister of Financial Institutions, again on his broken-down insurance system.

I want to tell him about Ralph Clark of Port Colborne, who answered an ad by the Niagara region community support services for seniors asking for volunteer drivers to take the elderly for doctors' appointments and shopping. When Mr. Clark inquired of his auto insurance company, he was told it would increase his rates substantially if he did that, so he decided not to be involved.

For more than a year this has been a common practice of the insurance companies and it affects most, if not all, of the community groups that need volunteer drivers. How can the minister excuse the social irresponsibility of the insurance companies in this practice? How can he excuse his own irresponsibility in not stopping it long ago?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The member raises a very interesting point. He should know that the whole area of good Samaritan legislation, the whole area of the Ontario liability insurers, that group that we put in place to cover people of that kind, have been addressed. I can assure the member that if he can get that group to get in touch with me I will put him in touch with the Ontario liability insurers and we can resolve that problem.

Mr. Swart: If it has been addressed, the minister must have kept it a secret. Even the insurance companies do not know it. Maybe he should notify them.

Does the minister not know—perhaps he does not, because he refuses to look into it—that none of the public auto insurance plans in the west has ever permitted extra rates to be charged volunteer drivers for community organizations? Why does he not drop his bloody blinkers and philosophic bias and realize that this is only one of 100 reasons why he should replace Ontario's costly and discriminatory insurance system with an affordable and fair public system such as they have in those western provinces?

Hon. Mr. Kwinter: The whole area of good Samaritan legislation has really nothing to do with insurance per se. Whether or not the private sector or the public sector delivers the insurance, it is a question of liability. It is something that requires legislation. It is something that various committees are looking at, including the Ontario Law Reform Commission. That is the issue, and if the member would only learn the issue maybe we could have a meaningful discussion.

Mr. Speaker: That question has been dealt with. New question, the member for Brantford.

KOOLATRON CORP.

Mr. Gillies: The Minister of Labour will know that Thursday last his officials charged a company in Brantford, Koolatron Corp., with breaching the Occupational Health and Safety Act with regard to isocyanates. The information surfacing this morning would indicate that this company moved to Batavia, New York, over the weekend, throwing between 100 and 125 of my constituents out of work.

What steps did the minister and his officials take to work with this company to ensure that the guidelines were being adhered to with regard to the chemical, but also to ensure that this company would continue to employ those people in my riding?

Hon. Mr. Wrye: I can tell the honourable member and the House that on Thursday last week, in response to an anonymous complaint, the industrial health and safety branch went to that plant and according to the notes I have: "Splashed isocyanates were observed on the floors; on workers, including skin contact; and on their clothing. Workers were not wearing appropriate protective equipment and some workers had not had preplacement medicals." In short, it was a mess.

We issued a stop-work order, and because the practice of working with isocyanates was such that the plant could not continue to operate in any way as long as a stop-work order was in place, production ceased. Apparently, the company tried to get in touch with the ministry on Friday after it requested that the stop-work be lifted and that request was refused. I am advised as well that the plant is going to be partially shut down, at least, and some of the work has been moved to Batavia.

I can tell the honourable member, who did call my office this morning, as did the mayor of Brantford, that I have today asked my officials to get in contact with the company and ask it to be at the ministry at 8 o'clock tomorrow morning. As I have said to the member privately, he is invited to be there as well.

Mr. Gillies: I have no quarrel at all with the minister and his officials enforcing the Occupational Health and Safety Act. I would like to know at what time he became aware of the company's intention to move, at what time he became aware it had laid off all the workers and apparently hired 82 people off the street in

Batavia, New York, on Sunday afternoon and started production there this morning.

What steps did the minister take to try to dissuade them from this foolish course of action? Further, I wonder whether the minister is aware that this company is the recipient of a \$300,000 loan from his colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. O'Neil); and what steps his government is taking to protect the taxpayers' investment in this company.

Hon. Mr. Wrye: On the latter matter, I can tell the honourable member that a lot of this has obviously become known to us only this morning. I can indicate to the honourable gentleman that I am aware there is Ontario Development Corp. money outstanding in this matter, and we have been in touch with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology to alert it to the difficulty.

We will see tomorrow morning whether there is some way we can reverse the decision. I do not like seeing Brantford or any other community lose 100 jobs, but I must tell the honourable member that if this decision is to be reversed by the company, it must understand that if it intends to stay in Ontario it will obey the laws; it will obey the health and safety laws of this province so that workers at Koolatron and every other plant and factory in this province will be properly protected.

WETLANDS MANAGEMENT

Mr. Wildman: I have a question of the Minister of Natural Resources. Given that in 1984 the previous government developed a three-page Guideline for Wetlands Management in Ontario, after three years of consultation, and given that those are only guidelines which are not enforceable, can the minister indicate when he expects the interministerial wetlands committee to arrive at a provincial wetlands policy and when he will publish that policy, which will be enforceable under the provincial Planning Act?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: One of the first interests I had in the wetlands had to do with taking an inventory across the province. I was not satisfied with the time frame talked about two years ago, and I asked that to be accelerated. What is happening is that we want a meaningful appraisal of the wetlands we have in Ontario so that we can address the problem the member has described. I cannot tell him precisely where that is now, but I certainly will get an answer for the member.

1420

Mr. Wildman: It is my understanding that, some time ago, the ministry found that only 13 per cent of the wetlands in southern Ontario were

left. Given that the 1984 guidelines dealt only with Ontario wetlands south of the pre-Cambrian shield and given that the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority has submitted to the minister a brief proposing sensitivity to the differences in northern Ontario, will the minister ensure that the new policy, when it is published, will include criteria specifically relevant to the north?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: Yes, I will take that into account. I am fully aware of the fact that the wetlands in northern Ontario have very different uses from the ones in southern Ontario. They will certainly be addressed in the description that we set down on meaningful use of wetlands in the future. It is one of the areas that I have a concern for because a great many of the problems in flooding and other things that are happening in parts of Ontario have to do with the reduction of wetlands and the precipitation flowing immediately to the streams.

I am certainly most anxious to address the problem and I am sure the honourable member will be pleased when we hand down the criteria.

TRADE WITH UNITED STATES

Mr. McFadden: I have a question for the Premier. The Premier will know very well that the American Congress today is considering the most restrictive, most protectionist legislation we have seen since 1930 when the Hawley-Smoot tariff was passed. I wonder if the Premier would indicate to the House today how many jobs in what industries would be at risk in Ontario if the kind of omnibus trade legislation which is now before the American Congress were to pass this year.

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I do not think there is any way to make that determination. I do not honestly think my honourable friend thinks there is. What it does essentially is accelerate some of the trade remedies and provide more power in the hands of the administration to deal with a number of issues, the sections 301s, 201s and other sections of its trade laws.

I do not think we can make that determination now. Whether that bill comes forward depends on a lot of other things that are going at the same time. There are certain vulnerable parts of our economy. Others are being dealt with in other ways as well. At the moment, it is impossible to tell what harm would be wreaked on the Ontario economy and whether in fact these administrative actions that are proposed would be used. So I regret to tell my friend that the question cannot be answered at this time.

Mr. McFadden: I am assuming that the officials, who I think are very capable, in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, and perhaps in the Ministry of Labour and in the office of the Treasurer, are likely investigating this and trying to get some estimates on an ongoing basis so that we can have a better idea what Ontario's appropriate position should be in the next few months and what kind of programs we might want to consider.

Does the Premier expect that jobs could be at risk in the steel industry and in other industries which today enjoy free trade with the United States if this kind of protectionist legislation becomes law in the United States by the end of this year?

Hon. Mr. Peterson: I think my honourable friend is somewhat confused. He is operating under the assumption that the steel industry, for example, is operating under some kind of free trade agreement or free trade with the United States. That is not the case. There are voluntary quotas, as he knows. They are managing that trade. It is under very serious assault at the present time. It is now going to be monitored by the federal government here, so in a sense it is part of the managed trade.

My friend is asking legitimate questions, but I am sure that having been there and talked to people, he knows enough about this issue to know that there is no answer to those questions. He cannot predict and I cannot predict how the administration would use those weapons that it is in the process perhaps of creating for itself. My honourable friend will be aware that it is essentially targeted at the Pacific Rim countries. He will also be aware there has been a revaluation in the price of the yen. That may take some pressure off the trade imbalance in the United States. That being said, the situation is serious, and we are mindful of that.

My honourable friend may go on and ask me another question, whether free trade would solve these questions, and the answer to that question is no. There is no guarantee of that either because, as he knows, Mr. Murphy and others have said there is no guarantee that the United States is prepared to get rid of contingency protections or exempt Canada from any omnibus trade bill if, in fact, that comes along. Senator Bentsen told me he regarded the steel industry as a strategic industry, and he could not see any particular exemptions for the steel business if there was a free trade agreement.

I am telling my honourable friend that there is a wide variety of opinion on those subjects. We

do not know the answers to those yet. I can assure my honourable friend that we are monitoring this in great detail. We have some idea of what is happening there, but the answers to his questions cannot be provided today and perhaps not for some long period of time.

IQ TESTS

Mr. McClellan: I have a question for the Minister of Education concerning a report in today's Toronto Star of a study by Jim Cummins of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, which has documented that immigrant children are being given culturally biased IQ tests by school boards across Ontario.

These IQ tests are being administered to children within five years of their coming to Canada, and in the case of most school boards within two years of their coming to Canada. Naturally, since the tests are culturally biased, the children are testing lower than Canadian-born students and, as a result, they are being streamed by this testing process into dead-end schools, are being barred from university as early as grade 6 and, quite frankly, are being streamed out of the education system.

I want to ask the minister what action he intends to take to regulate this kind of absurd, institutionally racist, culturally biased IQ testing applied to young children.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I saw the article to which the member for Bellwoods has made reference and I share his concern. It was because of the new government's concern that very early in our administration I sent a memorandum to all school boards in the province alerting them to this whole question of streaming and indicating that as a government we wanted to see action taken to deal with it.

As I recall, Mr. Cummins is part of an advisory group that is at work. I think it is having its last meeting within a week to prepare information for me so that we can take further steps. I share with the honourable member the concern he has identified, and we have taken action. I expect in the very near future, on the advice of the advisory committee in which Mr. Cummins is playing a role, to take additional steps to root out the very problem that the honourable member's question concerns.

Mr. Grande: Since the minister knows this is not the first time a report of such nature has been made public—this problem goes back at least 15 or 20 years, and most of us thought some halt had taken place in IQ testing—could the minister decide right now to ban further IQ tests in this

province until he takes a look at Professor Cummins's report and decides what policy he wishes to follow in regard to this? Otherwise, the future of many children is in jeopardy.

Hon. Mr. Conway: I want to indicate to my friend the member for Oakwood that we have taken a number of steps. One of those steps was, some time ago, striking an advisory committee in which a number of very expert individuals are playing a part. I expect a report from that group very shortly. As I recall, they will be meeting for the last time within a week to 10 days. On the basis of that I expect to have their advice and hope to be in a position to report back to my colleagues very shortly thereafter as to additional positive steps we want to take as a ministry and as a government to deal with the problem that has been identified.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION DEVELOPMENT CORP.

Mr. Hennessy: My question is to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. Specifically, what new business is the provincial government prepared to commit to the Urban Transportation Development Corp. and the workers in Thunder Bay and Kingston to replace the \$190-million Via Rail contract that it promised to Lavalin and Can-Car and cannot deliver on?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: I would remind my friend the member for Fort William that in fact it was the federal government that cancelled the order. It was his friends in Ottawa and not the provincial government.

Interjections.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Once again, the federal Conservatives are letting Ontario down.

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) is disturbing the environment here.

1430

Hon. Mr. Fulton: As the member is well aware, there is a great deal of work in place for a continued period of time, as we stated previously in the House on his previous questions on the same subject. There is a lot of work for both Thunder Bay and Kingston. We have no reason to think the present status of the Via order is going to change that in any way, shape or form, as we answered previously to the member.

Mr. Gregory: We know all about the present contracts UTDC has. My colleague's question had nothing to do with the existing contracts or the federal government's involvement.

My question to the minister, who now wants to tell us all about the virtues of UTDC and yet sold it for a pittance of its true value, is can he explain why, when he did not have a contract with Via, he could agree to assume liability for up to \$190 million should Via choose not to purchase rail cars from UTDC?

Hon. Mr. Fulton: The member today and his leader yesterday have totally distorted and misinterpreted the terms and conditions of the sale. The \$190 million is nowhere close to our exposure as far as the province is concerned. It is much less, considerably less than \$190 million.

ENVIRONMENTAL HYPERSENSITIVITY

Mr. D. S. Cooke: I have a question for the Minister of Health. It is in regard to the problem of people who suffer from the disease, environmental hypersensitivity. I am sure the minister is aware that people who suffer from this disease have extreme difficulties in accessing housing, the health care system, the social service system, and specifically disability pensions. I would like to ask the minister why, after nearly two years since the Judge Thomson report was tabled with his ministry, he has implemented only one of the recommendations; namely, some research be carried out in the province on this important problem?

Hon. Mr. Elston: The gentleman is absolutely correct that we recognize there are problems generated by people suffering from what is called environmental hypersensitivity. One of the things we do not know and do not understand is the basis on which this debilitating problem arises and occurs. We do not always know exactly how to deal with it and that is one of the reasons we have asked for research proposals to be brought forward to us, so that we can determine what we can do to get to the root of the problem and eliminate it for those people, if that is possible.

We have had several meetings with people who are interested in these projects with respect to research. We have met with people who are putting the case for less stringent requirements with respect to pensions. I know my colleague the Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) and I are both very sensitive to the issues that are raised there.

We have moved beyond the theoretical standpoint where people were questioning whether it was causing disabilities. We recognize it, but we have to understand what it is so we can then determine how we move in conjunction with my colleague the Minister of Housing (Mr. Curling),

who is also very much involved in developing a response to this very serious problem. Together, among the three ministries, we will deal with this issue in a most sensitive fashion.

Mr. D. S. Cooke: The fact of the matter is that the minister can talk as long as he wants to talk, but there were recommendations in the Judge Thomson report other than just research: things dealing with testing, with food and with accessing the health care system. None of those recommendations has been implemented by the minister. Why is it that the doctors who deal in this area of clinical ecology who have made a very basic request to the minister in writing have been refused a meeting? Is he not simply reinforcing one of the concerns Judge Thomson expressed on page 268 of his report, which says, "Efforts to condemn the practice of clinical ecology... will only reinforce the isolation of the patients who have sought their help..."? When is the minister going to act on this problem and help the thousands of people who are literally dying without his assistance?

Hon. Mr. Elston: One of the problems in deciding how to respond to the requests of the clinical ecologists is providing ourselves with the basis upon which their interventions are either helpful or not helpful. We have to understand what it is that is appropriate in terms of treatment.

I am sure the honourable gentleman would like to make the public aware of the fact that a private operation in the United States that was the only clinic in North America—the only hospital, anyway—that dealt with this particular problem has closed its doors. I do not exactly know the reason. He is right in suggesting, as he probably would, that this requires us to understand even more soundly the response we must make to assist these people. We cannot make a response to these people, however, unless we understand what the problem is.

Once we understand that, we will be in a much better position to make a definitive response to their problems by coming up with some sensitive solutions. I appreciate the need to move as quickly as we can. We are trying, but it is very difficult for us to move to solve a problem when there is no agreement with respect to what is the cause of the difficulty.

RECYCLING

Mr. Haggerty: I have a question for the Minister of the Environment. Is he aware of the recent serious fire that destroyed the Niagara waste recycling facilities in the town of Fort Erie? What steps is the ministry contemplating to

provide a measure of assistance in maintaining the important community service of a waste recycling facility in the Niagara region?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: The member identifies a genuine concern that people have in the Niagara region.

Mr. Villeneuve: Right in your own backyard.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: That is right, and we will address that as fairly as we address it everywhere else in the province.

Mr. Pierce: What are you going to do?

Hon. Mr. Bradley: There will be no favours shown to my backyard.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Interjections are out of order. Please disregard them.

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Members of the House will be aware of the popularity of recycling programs in the province and of the new measures that our government has taken and will continue to take to improve the attractiveness of recycling.

The Niagara waste recycling facility, which the member for Erie identifies, did have a fire a couple of weeks ago that removed its warehouse facility. I can assure the member it is my intention to meet with those who operated Niagara recycling, and with others who are interested in this important field of endeavour environmentally, and to have very extensive discussions with them in order to restore a service that is essential to ensure that there is a diversion of waste going to the landfill site.

Mr. Haggerty: I had difficulty hearing the answer. Would the minister mind repeating it?

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I suggest the member could do the same as I do on many occasions: read Hansard.

ONTARIO NATIVE ECONOMIC SUPPORT GRANT

Mr. Pollock: I have a question to the Minister of Citizenship and Culture. Would the minister please tell this House why an Ontario native economic support grant application, which was started in 1985 by the Tyendinaga Indian reserve for an addition to the All Saints Anglican Church hall, still has not been approved?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I will have to get back to the member. As he knows, I have met with that particular group and I suspect it is just administrative details that they have not supplied to us, but as long as the application is before us we will try to deal with it.

1440

Mr. Pollock: The native people of Tyendinaga Indian reserve have been waiting for over two years. Will the minister assure the people from Tyendinaga that the application will be dealt with immediately?

Hon. Ms. Munro: I can certainly do that. I just want the member to know that it is very uncommon that we would drop an application. We keep the application open in order that both parties can continue to work with each other. We will try to expedite the matter.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. It is very difficult to hear. The member for Ottawa Centre would like to ask a question.

CHILD CARE

Ms. Gigantes: I have a question for the Minister of Community and Social Services. He has talked of the need for 100,000 new day care spaces in this province, which is an underestimate, and he has told us that he is going to see the development of new day care spaces in the nonprofit sector. Since we do not have a white paper to which we can refer after a year of promises, can the minister tell us what provision he will be making to assist community-based groups such as Project 2000 in Toronto and the co-op day care development centre proposal from the Glebe Parent Co-op Day Care Centre to provide the kind of assistance community groups need to start their own day care centres in the nonprofit sector?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: We are supportive of community development groups for the very purpose the member has just mentioned. As a matter of fact, we are examining the Project 2000 request at the present time. One of the things we have said, though, is that it must be available to the entire community. We have received some requests for support from groups that have a very narrow focus and we have indicated that we are not prepared to support that very narrow focus.

Ms. Gigantes: Can the minister explain why it is a very narrow focus for hundreds of families on waiting lists at family co-op day care projects to be interested in developing more family co-op day care projects in the nonprofit sector?

Hon. Mr. Sweeney: In the particular situation I believe the member is referring to, there was a reluctance of that particular group to work with the local municipality. As a matter of fact, it did not want the municipality included in the process at all. I think the member is well aware of the fact

that as a ministry we work very closely with municipalities and we intend to continue to do so.

FISH MANAGEMENT

Mr. Pierce: My question today is to the Minister of Natural Resources regarding his ministry's policy with respect to fish management in northern Ontario. Along with my colleagues, I was led to believe that the latest form of Ontario tax, the resident fishing licence, would be used to increase fish stock and public participation in the sport of game fishing. I have information that reveals the Ministry of Natural Resources has been closing access roads to fishing lakes in northern Ontario. What are we to believe? Is the ministry increasing the fish stock and accessibility to lakes with the funds generated by the new licences or are they going into the general revenue?

Hon. Mr. Kerrio: The honourable member has been here long enough to know that all money goes into general revenue, into the consolidated revenue fund. He should know that the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) promised me that this money will be transferred and I will use every nickel and dollar that comes in in the form of a fishing licence to enhance the opportunities for people to fish across this great province. It is something that has needed doing for a good long time. It is being done and I think everyone in the province is very pleased about it.

VISITOR

Mr. Pope: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: There are many distinguished guests in the galleries today, but one who I think deserves particular note is Leo Del Villano. He was the mayor of Timmins for 18 years and municipal alderman and municipal representative in Timmins for 27 years. He has had a 40-year career in municipal politics.

Mr. Speaker: We are most pleased to have all our guests. I remind the honourable member that the appropriate time to do this is during members' statements.

TABLING OF INFORMATION

Mr. Wildman: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker: I would draw your attention to standing order 88(d), related to written questions, which indicates that a "minister shall answer written questions within 14 days unless he indicates he requires more time."

I tabled a question on May 5 dealing with spraying in northern Ontario. I asked the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) to

indicate what areas would be sprayed. We have yet to receive any response—not an interim one either—other than a letter from a Mr. Lessard of his ministry, which basically does not tell us anything.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Wildman: When will this minister respond and follow the rules as they are stated in the rule book?

Mr. Speaker: The member makes a good point. It is a point of order; it is according to the standing orders; and he has drawn it to the attention of a minister. I am sure the minister will take note of it.

Mr. Warner: If he does not follow the rules he should resign.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Warner: If I resigned, they would all be happy. I am not going to do that.

[Applause]

Mr. Warner: Thank you. I appreciate the members' support.

PETITION

DIALYSIS UNIT

Mr. Warner: "To the Honourable the Lieutenant Governor and the Legislative Assembly of Ontario"—members are waiting to see what today's figure is. I know that is why everyone is waiting.

"We, the undersigned, beg leave to petition the parliament of Ontario as follows:

"That the Ministry of Health respond to the need for a renal dialysis unit at Scarborough General Hospital, since no such unit exists between the city of Toronto and the city of Kingston."

This is signed by 107 persons, bringing the new total to 2,012.

REPORT BY COMMITTEE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON RETAIL STORE HOURS

Mr. Guindon from the select committee on retail store hours presented the committee's first report with respect to correspondence from Timothy S. B. Danson.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have a brief comment on the report?

Mr. Guindon: As vice-chairman, I am presenting the first report on the select committee

on retail store hours. It is in regard to the letter which was sent to the chairman of the committee, the member for Oakville (Mr. O'Connor), from a Mr. Danson.

Upon your request, Mr. Speaker, the committee sat this morning and reviewed the matter. Upon review of the matter, your committee views with alarm the veiled threats in the letter of May 13, 1987, to the chairman of the select committee on retail store hours by Timothy S. B. Danson and views this type of conduct with deep regret.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

OSHAWA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION ACT

Mr. Breaugh moved first reading of Bill Pr10, An Act respecting the Oshawa Public Utilities Commission.

Motion agreed to.

CITY OF TORONTO ACT

Mr. Offer moved first reading of Bill Pr8, An Act respecting the City of Toronto.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Mr. Speaker, just before you call the orders, I would like to have a word to say about this afternoon's agenda. In Orders and Notices, we have two important third readings dealing with the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk and, peripherally, the county of Brant.

We would then go on to a continuation of the discussion on the provision of interim supply. Bill 188, order 64, will not be called for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that the select committee on retail store hours has just had an interim report today. We understand their complete report will be available tomorrow. If the members would like the other reasons, I will talk to them later.

It is my intention to call resolution 6 at four o'clock. With the consent of the House, I would like a brief adjournment beginning when we finish interim supply or at 3:45, whichever is more appropriate. I would like to call order 1.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

THIRD READING

The following bill was given third reading on motion:

Bill 6, An Act to amend the Regional Municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk Act.

MUNICIPAL STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Grandmaître moved third reading of Bill 12, An Act to amend the Municipal Act and the Education Act.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just a word: I know the honourable members would be glad to know that representatives of the county of Brant and the regional municipality of Haldimand-Norfolk are in the gallery. They are expressing their interest in the passage of this bill through the House. On their behalf, I want to express the gratitude of the taxpayers in the area for the co-operation that has been experienced.

The honourable minister has made it clear how important this legislation is. It actually breaks new ground. It may very well want to be followed by some other regions and counties in the province.

I would also inform the members that we have arranged, if the House gives third reading to this second bill, that His Honour the Lieutenant Governor will give his royal assent tomorrow afternoon at four o'clock.

Motion agreed to.

INTERIM SUPPLY (continued)

Resuming the adjourned debate on the motion for interim supply for the period commencing June 1, 1987, and ending June 30, 1987.

Mr. Stevenson: I want to draw attention to basically two major issues, one relating to highways and the other to agriculture. Of course, if we are to believe some of the initial releases in the Toronto Star today about what is coming in this afternoon's budget, maybe all my concerns about roads and highways will disappear in a matter of a few moments, but I suspect we are not going to be quite that fortunate.

With particular interest in one highway, I want to talk briefly about Highway 48 in the Sutton-Virginia area. This is a road that we have been drawing to the attention of the Minister of Transportation and Communications (Mr. Fulton) for over a year now. It is a piece of highway that is becoming increasingly dangerous to drive on because of increased traffic of all types but particularly because of increased truck traffic largely related to the aggregate industry north of that area.

We are seeing these trucks going through there at a very high rate of speed. People in the area wish to make left-hand turns off Highway 48 into the Morning Glory public school or into the many

beach roads off that area leading up to the lake. Of course, there are many permanent homes now on these beach roads; there are not just cottages but several hundred homes, in some cases, on these beach roads.

We have asked for left-turn lanes on this piece of highway so that people can make safe left-hand turns and not be bowled over by these trucks that are going through, which at times get so close one can pretty nearly tell whether they are using General Electric, General Motors or Ford lights in their headlamps. There is certainly never any problem reading the names of the trucks in the rear-view mirror as they whistle past on the right-hand shoulder of the road as you try to make a left-hand turn.

It is becoming increasingly dangerous and many people are quite concerned about safety there. There have been a number of near misses as far as serious accidents in the area are concerned, and I hope that as the new budget is released, the government will do some work on that section of road in order to make it a safer piece of highway. Last summer, there was a major resurfacing job on Highway 48 just east of the section I am talking about, and I certainly request that it is about time that highway reconstruction was continued to the west to deal with some of the very serious safety problems that are occurring in that particular area.

The ministry staff are very much aware of it. We had a citizens' meeting and we had a whole hall full of people out to hear the concerns from bus drivers in the area, from the school principal and from several parents associated with the Morning Glory school. We had many representatives of the beach residents along there, and so it is coming loud and clear from the local residents that something needs to be done.

In closing on that particular section, I suggest to the minister that it is about time he quit studying it and actually got down to work to get that problem solved before somebody is killed on that piece of road.

I want now to talk very briefly about the situation in agriculture. We have an industry that is in the worst condition since the 1930s, and we have a situation where governments around the world have tried to react to a new development since this government took over. That new development, really, is the retaliation of the United States to the ongoing funding and subsidization of agriculture in the European Community. That retaliation has meant a significant reduction in the price of grains to Canadian producers and, in particular, to Ontario produc-

ers. That has had all sorts of ramifications through the whole agricultural industry, not just to farmers but to all the agricultural suppliers as well. Many of them are hurting because the agricultural industry is suffering so significantly.

We have seen responses from other provincial governments. We have seen responses from the federal government; for example, the special grains program, the \$1-billion special allotment that came last year to grain producers across Canada. Unfortunately, the provincial government here has not responded to those needs at all.

The minister is always quick to point out some of the money that has been forthcoming to this industry—money that was promised at the time of the 1985 election and money that was promised to address certain other needs they saw at that time, but nothing has been brought forward to address the new needs and, certainly, the most critical needs relating to the current shootout in the international marketplace.

1500

As I say, this is a new issue that came to pass since this government took power, and there has been absolutely zero in terms of new policy or new funding to react to that particular issue. I suspect that if one checks around Ontario, there will be hardly a farmer who will disagree with my statement on that particular issue.

There are requests now for major new positions and actions to be taken by this government in assistance to the agricultural industry here in this province, and the government simply has not responded to them. Of course, we have the request in from the Ontario Cattlemen's Association relating to the checkoff, which we have seen no action on since the annual meeting.

We have the situation in the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Marketing Board for processing vegetables. They are asking for action to clean up a situation in that sector of the industry that is causing them some real problems in organized marketing. There has been no action from the government in that area. It does not require changes in legislation, as I understand it. It does not even require a change in regulation through cabinet. It is just a matter of a change in policy by the ministry. Essentially, that could happen overnight and the minister can make those changes. Again, there has not been the correct action taken in that particular area.

We have groups coming forward now asking for stabilization in the grains that are kept on the farm for feed. Again, we have had no indication of the policy direction this ministry has taken.

There simply is no leadership, no position being taken by the current government on any difficult problem that is occurring in agriculture. Of course, as soon as something came forward within the last two years, they threw some money at it and hoped that people would shut up, go away and leave them alone.

Time is catching up to them. The easy answers have been dealt with and now they have to face the difficult problems. As a result, they go to the minister and they are getting no response whatsoever on these very difficult problems. The agricultural organizations are becoming extremely frustrated by the lack of imagination which is being shown by this government in dealing with some of the real, tough matters that have to be dealt with that are facing agriculture today.

Think of the amount of money this government has to spend. We are expecting something like \$5 billion of new money this year. Think of what one could do with \$5 billion. It is something that is almost impossible to comprehend for most people. Certainly, it is our hope that a significant portion of that money will be put into agriculture in such a way that it will deal with some of the new problems that are facing the agricultural industry, problems that have come into existence since this particular government took over.

Mr. Gillies: There are just a couple of thoughts that we would like to put before the House now, very appropriately I think, on the question of interim supply, mere minutes away from the Treasurer (Mr. Nixon) introducing his 1987 budget.

As was the case yesterday, we would like to talk about issues and about some of the matters of importance to the province. I would not want to seize on this occasion to offer the kind of petty and personally nasty remarks that were offered by, let us say, the Minister of Education (Mr. Conway) yesterday during the throne debate. That is a kind of politics that our caucus and, in fairness, I believe the New Democratic caucus, has tried to eschew of late, but with the increasingly imperial style of our friends opposite becoming apparent as they begin to crank up the Liberal-bureaucratic machine for their expected election, perhaps we should just dismiss the minister's remarks yesterday as a couple of crass little shots and nothing to be too awfully worried about.

Mr. Breaugh: Petulant.

Mr. Gillies: "Petulant" is another word I hear used. I think there is general agreement on this

side of the House that that kind of personally nasty stream of politics should just be ignored.

Hon. Mr. Riddell: You should be the last person to speak those words.

Mr. Callahan: You know a lot about that, Phil. You are a master of it.

Mr. Gillies: With that in mind, with the Minister of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) and the member for Brampton (Mr. Callahan) now contributing their own insults—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Morin): Order. Please address the chair.

Mr. Gillies: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will direct my comments through you so I can ignore the nasty insults coming from the member for Brampton. Maybe that is the best way to do it.

Certainly in granting our support to the government for interim supply so the necessary services for the people of Ontario can be funded and maintained and the civil service can be paid and all those wonderful things, it does provide us with one more opportunity to tell the people of Ontario the direction of spending and the direction of fiscal policy under this government. It is particularly appropriate if we can do so on the eve of the budget.

The real legacy of the Peterson administration in its first two years is that it spends unlike any government we have ever seen in Ontario before. We have a government that, as it prevents—presents its 1987 budget—a Freudian slip; perhaps we would like to prevent that budget, but the government will present it—a government that has increased spending by some 30 per cent since it took office; a government that has lifted deftly from the pockets of the taxpayers of Ontario some \$5 billion more than in any budget presented before the Peterson administration took office; and a government that has increased 19 separate taxes since taking office.

This has been a cause of some alarm to our party, because we believe our administration in years past had taken the lead in Ontario in trying to hold the line on government spending and trying to address the very pressing concern of the provincial deficit. I believe every responsible member of this House, of every partisan stripe, shares a concern about the level of the provincial deficit and the concern that we should be focusing our fiscal energies in Ontario on funding the necessary services for our people today without burdening those who come after us with an unwieldy debt.

I know this is a noble sentiment that would be shared by my friend the Minister of the

Environment (Mr. Bradley) and any thinking politician in this province who does not want to leave an unwieldy burden on those who come after us. We have a concern that the Treasurer keep this in mind and that as we grant the necessary funds for him to continue the government's operations, we do so in a fiscally responsible manner.

Our government, starting with the direction taken by Premier Davis and by the former Treasurer Mr. McKeough back in 1975, had tried to do two things to hold the line on government spending and address the deficit problem long before any administration in the country, and especially any Liberal administration in Ottawa, had thought this was a necessary or good thing to do.

Also, there had been an effort through the late 1970s and into the 1980s to get some sort of handle on the size of the provincial civil service. There was a feeling, especially in an age of increasing automation, that we could maintain or even improve the services offered to our people without the continuing growth we had witnessed in the public service through the 1960s and early 1970s. During the latter years of the Davis and Miller administrations, we saw that some 4,000-plus employees were trimmed from the provincial payroll.

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We believe this was done with no pain and no inconvenience to the public, but through greater efficiency and greater use of the resources available to the government of Ontario. Sad to say, we have seen this trend completely reversed by the current administration. Under the leadership of the Treasurer and the Premier (Mr. Peterson), we have seen the civil service in Ontario grow again in the last two years by some 5,000 people, thereby completely undoing any good that had been done in this area by the previous administration.

This causes us some alarm and it strikes us as incongruous with the kind of good sense and parsimony we had always associated with the current Treasurer. I say this with the full knowledge that there are representatives from the municipalities of Brant county in the gallery, with whom the Treasurer and I try to work closely on matters of mutual concern.

I know that as municipal politicians and administrators, they have felt themselves very constrained in the last number of years. They have had to economize. They have had to hold the line on the level of employment in their jurisdictions. They may well ask themselves,

"Why does the province of Ontario not feel it should show the kind of diligence and restraint we have had to show?" I say to my friends from Brant county that this is a question they may well ask, one that is of concern to a number of members of this House.

We have seen a number of changes in the provincial tax system since 1985. I could run through them quickly. Under this administration, we have seen an increase in personal income tax of four per cent plus the addition of a surtax levy. We have seen the changed capital cost allowance.

Mr. Callahan: What did your government ever do?

Mr. Gillies: The member for Brampton, who did not feel constrained to contribute to this debate between the speakers on this side of the House, has decided to contribute through my part of the debate. I wonder whether I might ask him to hold those very valuable thoughts that emanate from the member from time to time and offer them when we can all hear them clearly.

In the meantime, we have seen this government change the capital cost allowance and eliminate the inventory allowance, increase alcohol-beverage markup—a matter of great concern, I am sure, to the member for Brampton—increase fees for drivers' licences and motor vehicle registrations, raise the corporate income tax rate, increase the land transfer tax and increase the gasoline tax by going to a flat tax. Now that is something my colleagues and I spoke very strongly against, but in its last budget the government chose to do so to the detriment of the motorists of the province.

Again, my friends from Brant county might be interested to know that we had raised in this House the question of whether all the additional revenues coming from gasoline and fuel consumption in this province would go towards meeting the needs of our infrastructure in terms of transportation, and in particular, whether we would see tax increases of this nature going to the construction of Highway 403, something about which we are very concerned in our part of the province. Sadly, we see that project just sort of lumping along—

Hon. Mr. Bradley: Mayor Neumann is looking after that.

Mr. Gillies: In due time. My friend the Minister of the Environment interjects. I know the mayor of Brantford shares my concern about the progress of Highway 403.

If I might continue, we have seen increased tobacco taxes and that has caused a lot of concern

among some of the tobacco farmers in our part of the province. I might say parenthetically on that subject that we are all extremely concerned about the health effects of smoking, but something—

Mr. G. I. Miller: Do we have to ask you whether we can do it or not?

Mr. Gillies: My friend the member for Haldimand-Norfolk is currently interjecting, which as we all know is against the standing orders.

What we would like to see is something meaningful come forward from this government in terms of getting the resources needed to the tobacco farmers so they can make a livelihood at another type of farming. We have not seen those kinds of resources or directions coming from this government.

Then we have seen the retail sales tax base broadened and the effects of that tax placed on a number of goods and services in the province. What this tells us is that it is really about time—even at a time of economic growth and relative prosperity in our province, the message we are trying to get through to the Treasurer and to his officials is that we believe the time is right to start holding the line on spending and seriously addressing the question of the provincial deficit.

Although I would not presume to throw out figures, because the Treasurer will be in a position one short hour from now to tell us the actual situation, I would, by way of direction, offer to the Treasurer that he should definitely take advantage of the economic prosperity and the unprecedented amount of money coming into the provincial coffers right now to give the taxpayers a break.

We have suggested a reduction in the sales tax from seven per cent to six per cent, which is easily doable in the current economic situation. This kind of leverage and this kind of money was not available to administrations five or even 10 years ago. It is now. We believe that it could be done and that it would stimulate growth in our province. We believe there could be a reduction of some 10 per cent in the personal and corporate taxes.

Having done these things and having given the Treasurer the authority under the motion before the House right now to fund the operations of the government—having done all those things—we believe that the two aims can be met: the maintenance of essential services, the improvement of the social and economic lives of our citizens, and at the same time, the tax-cut measures and the holding-the-line ethic that we believe can be achieved by this government. I

believe the Treasurer and indeed his officials, many of whom I had the honour of working with in the past, are people of ability and are sensible people who could achieve these aims.

A number of us in the House right now have sat in past cabinets, and we know the kind of competing pressures that are put on a Treasurer in terms of expenditure, especially leading up to a budget. Everybody wants more money and every minister has that special case that simply has to be met by the Treasury; but, even in so doing, we urge the Treasurer to exercise a very light hand in terms of tax increases and to do what he can to give the people of this province a break.

I will conclude with that. We will, of course, be supporting the motion for the granting of interim supply. We look forward in the next number of minutes to hearing just what the Treasurer's financial plan for Ontario is. He can rest assured that the kind of policies we have been offering and the kind of direction we believe should be taken will indeed be spoken to consistently following the budget. These are the directions we believe he should be going in, and believe me, be it now, be it during an election campaign, be it in the fall of this year or the spring of next year, these are the things we will be talking about and calling this government to account with regard to.

Mr. McClellan: I do not intend to speak for more than a few seconds. It is a little bit strange to be making a budget speech in the few minutes prior to the Treasurer's budget address. We will have lots of opportunity in the period following the Treasurer's budgetary address, however long or short that may be, to respond to the initiatives put forward by the Treasurer.

I simply want to say, on behalf of the New Democratic Party, that we will of course be supporting the motion for interim supply which makes it possible for the government of Ontario to pay the public service and to pay for government programs between June 1, 1987, and the end of June of the same year.

1520

Mr. Brandt: I am delighted to have an opportunity to participate in this debate. At the outset of my remarks I want to say I have no difficulty whatever associating myself with the comments made by my colleague the member for Brantford (Mr. Gillies), who put the position of our party before the House in a very clear and very succinct fashion.

We have some concerns about the expansion of the budgetary expenditures that have been the experience of the current Treasurer, with respect

to what we have seen in the past and the kind of increases in taxation that have occurred in this province. Certainly when one takes a look at the figures, one realizes that the people of Ontario, those who pay the bills, the people who have to go to work every day and raise the amounts of money that are necessary to create the tax revenues the current Treasurer requires for his various programs, are the people who are having an increasingly great deal of difficulty in attempting to come to grips with the amount of taxes being extricated from them on a regular weekly basis.

The one tax measure alone which my colleague from Brantford commented on, but did not give the figure related to that, was the increase in gas tax, which is about \$500,000. Each and every day we go through in this province, an additional \$500,000 rolls into the ever-bloating coffers of the Treasurer in order to provide the funds for some of the programs he deems necessary. That \$500,000 per day—

Hon. Mr. Nixon: You raised the gas tax by 10 per cent a year.

Mr. Brandt: The Treasurer will have more than adequate time; he is going to be highlighted very shortly, nearing the hour of four o'clock. After I have concluded my remarks, he will have more than ample time to raise any questions he has on the comments I want to share with him, but according to the rules of this House, I believe I have the floor, at least momentarily.

With respect to that, I wanted to say the additional \$500,000 was brought into this House in, I might say, a very cute and circuitous kind of fashion by the current Treasurer in the sense that he virtually promised, without saying so, that the people of this province were going to get a reduction in their gas taxes.

That was certainly the impression he left when he talked about how evil the ad valorem tax was in this province, when he talked about how we were taking this money from the poor taxpayers on a regular basis. The fact of the matter was that as soon as the Treasurer brought in his new application of taxation, the taxes went up very dramatically.

Now let me tell members how quickly those taxes have increased. Ontario's revenues are up about 15.5 per cent and the per capita, disposable income of the people who are paying the bills in this province is up about one third of that amount, which means that the programs being put in place during admittedly good times in this province are taking more and more tax dollars to fund. I think that only follows, and we understand that some

of those additional expenditures, some of those additional programs, are in fact necessary.

But I want to caution the Treasurer: there are ups and downs economically that occur in this province and there are some predictions about a potential slowdown in the not-too-distant future that the Treasurer is also going to have to make some preparation for funding. When one increases the base of each and every program throughout the provincial bureaucracy, when each ministry gets substantially more money—some three times what the people of this province are getting—and when that continues to grow by leaps and bounds as it has through the experience we have had with this current Treasurer, the fact of the matter is that what we are ultimately going to end up doing is paying for future bills with our children's credit cards. That is exactly what we are doing.

One of the things I am very concerned about that the Treasurer has not addressed—and certainly the throne speech is not a matter of his responsibility but to a certain extent it does indicate the direction the government intends to go with respect to some programs—but dealing with developments in the year prior to presentation of the current throne speech, the concern I have is with respect to the thrust taken by the current government in terms of job creation.

I know there are members opposite who will stand up and say, "We have created some 150,000 jobs annually," and they are quite proud of that record, knowing full well they have had very little, if anything, to do about that job creation program, principally because they have not—

Interjection.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Brandt: I see the member for Brampton woke up again. It is a pleasure to have him back in the House, alert and interjecting. Without him it would be very difficult at times to keep our interest level up.

The fact of the matter is that the members opposite have not one single program they can point to that has resulted in the creation of jobs in this province, other than a 4,000- or 5,000-person increase in the provincial bureaucracy.

Mr. Bernier: Ministry staff.

Mr. Brandt: And some of the ministry staff they have taken on who were part and parcel of that number.

I have to tell the Treasurer that they have had absolutely zero to do with other job creation programs. They have not created an investment

climate; they have done nothing with respect to new initiatives in terms of high technology; they have done nothing for the slow-growth areas of this province. It is interesting to note that a government that pats itself on the back, indicating what great initiatives it has taken in the field of job creation, consists of the very people who wring their hands and say there is nothing they can do about the thousands upon thousands of people who have been laid off in the north. Some 2,000 jobs have been lost in my riding alone as a result of the downturn in the petrochemical industry.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: They need better representation.

Mr. Brandt: I hear the Treasurer interject that if they had better representation those job losses would not have occurred. I recall some problems that occurred in the Treasurer's own riding with respect to certain job losses. I bring to his attention certain cutbacks that occurred with respect to Massey-Ferguson at one particular point in his very illustrious political career. I recall his standing up on this side of the House and asking the government what it was going to do about that.

I find the positions are reversed today. I have no qualms, no reservations whatever about saying to the Treasurer that my riding now requires help. After going through many, many decades of providing very substantial sums of money for the revenues that this province requires, it now finds itself in a position where it does need some government help. Is that government help forthcoming? Government help has not, up until this point in time, been forthcoming.

I want to be fair. The initiative taken by the Minister of Health (Mr. Elston) with respect to the expansion of St. Joseph's Hospital in my riding was an initiative I applauded. I congratulated the government and gave it full marks for having made the right decision in that respect. Hopefully, that expansion will not only create some jobs in the construction field in my riding but also relate to permanent employment.

I want to get back to the issue I think the Treasurer lost sight of in his previous budget. Hopefully, he will cover off this point in today's budget in some fashion. It is very easy to spend additional money and to expand programs. It is very difficult, however, to put in place programs that are going to provide the new type of jobs we are going to require in the days to come.

In this particular respect, I have to say that the government has failed very miserably. They

have failed badly because they have no grasp of what it is they have to do to create these jobs. They have no grasp, no understanding of what high technology is. They bungled badly the Exploracom situation. Their highly vaunted high-tech fund, the \$1-billion, 10-year program that was supposed to result in an injection of some \$100 million a year has not only floundered badly, it is a total, absolute failure. Nothing happened during the first year of that program.

I am hopeful that something will happen in the Treasurer's budget for the coming year, because I think it is absolutely essential for this province, and for the jobs that we are going to require in the future, that those programs be successful.

I for one will stand up and applaud the Treasurer if he does invest some money in those kinds of very concrete initiatives, because they are badly needed and they are ones that will determine, to a great extent, the kind of future we are going to experience in this province.

We are, on all sides of the House, in favour of many of the social programs and the initiatives taken by the current government. We do have some concerns, however, about the affordability of some of those programs in the long term. In fact, the affordability of these programs can be guaranteed only with a strong employment creation program brought about through something such as a high-tech fund, but certainly not in the direction the government took with its previous statements in that regard.

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We do not need a shotgun approach. We need a very specific, well-honed kind of program such as the previous government put in place. The number of research and high-tech centres we put in place right across the province have worked extremely well and have provided our industries with the kind of research and development assistance that places them at the forefront of some of the new technological developments that are required to keep them competitive.

It is interesting to note that the competition we face in many parts of the world, with the United States, Japan and some of the Pacific Rim countries, has a type of unified government-industry approach where they take a collective thrust in certain specific well-identified industries to create the kinds of economic activity and jobs that are going to be required in the days ahead. This government has not found the wherewithal at this point to be able to do that kind of thing. As I say, if it has failed miserably at any initiative it has taken previously, this is one that

has been a nonstarter to this point. Absolutely nothing has happened.

I know other colleagues want to speak on interim supply, which is the dollars that will be required by the government from June 1 to June 30. I have no reservations and no objection to supporting the government on this request, but I think the money should be spent wisely and well because the government, in and by itself, does not create money. It has to be taken from the people of the province. The nine million plus people of this province have to pay for the programs that are being put in place. They are the ones who have to dig even more deeply into their pockets to provide the revenues the Treasurer requires.

I say to the Treasurer and to the government that it is important that we have more emphasis on future planning with respect to high technology and on the competitiveness of Ontario industries. He has rejected our call for a royal commission on workers' compensation. I have to tell him by way of caution that an increasing number of employers are coming into my office who are having great difficulty funding the present program, which is running about three times the level of inflation in terms of the dollars required to fund that particular program alone. The unfunded liability is absolutely and totally out of control at this point, somewhere between \$5 billion and \$6 billion, and no one on that side of the House has any idea how deeply in debt it is with respect to that program.

What we have asked for on this side of the House is some form of responsible response to the whole issue of workers' compensation. We know there are workers who are dissatisfied and who are having great difficulty getting the benefits they truly require, need and deserve in relation to workers' compensation. On the other hand, we have a program that is becoming increasingly unaffordable.

It may be of interest to some of the members opposite to know that the Workers' Compensation Board increases for employers over the course of the past two years this government has been in power have resulted in increases of 12 and 13 per cent. How long can that go on when we have relatively controlled inflation at present that is running at only four per cent? How long does the government think it is going to be before a great number of industries, small employers in particular, simply go out of business, not able to keep up with the increased pressure and demand for dollars that it is taking out of their businesses?

I caution the government that it cannot kill the goose that lays the golden egg. The golden egg of taxation must come from the creative efforts of the people of the province. It has to come as a result of a healthy environment, a healthy economy and a competitive response to what is going on in various other parts of the world. None of these issues, none of these questions has been addressed by the people opposite.

I had better conclude at this time and allow some of my other colleagues to speak on the matter. I thank the members of the House for listening to me on this issue and I look forward to the budget on the part of the Treasurer within the next few moments.

Mrs. Marland: In rising to speak in this debate on the interim supply bill, I really wish it could be with more enthusiasm that I address this particular motion. I have to say at the outset that I do not have any difficulty with the calibre of the civil servants we have in Ontario; indeed, I am very proud of the people who work for our province.

I do, however, have a great deal of concern and a great deal of disappointment with the programs the province has had from this government for the past two years. Being a new member of this Legislature and having just celebrated the end of my second year in this House, I suppose I have to admit that more than anything else my disappointment with this government has been with the fact that it does not seem to care about the very real needs of the average person in this province.

When we talk about real needs, I respectfully suggest that after food there is no greater need than shelter. It is somewhat ironic that in this International Year of Shelter for the Homeless we have in Ontario a housing policy that is practically nonexistent. If there is one need above all other needs that is brought to my attention both at my Queen's Park office and at my constituency office in Mississauga, it is the need for affordable housing.

Quite frankly, I do not know, nor of course does anyone else, what the budget that is going to be presented in this House in about 22 minutes' time will do to resolve that problem for the people of Ontario, certainly including those people I have the privilege of representing in Mississauga South. I find that people are very disturbed when they come into my office and ask for the list of lower-priced apartment buildings or whether there is any other accommodation we may know of where they might be able to look for a room to rent; any accommodation whatsoever.

They are disturbed because I am not in a position to provide them with a solution. There are simply no units available for them. Even when they go out to the areas or the buildings where we think there are spaces available, very often by the time they get there the space we were told in the morning was available is gone by the afternoon.

These people come back to me. It is amazing how many of them are well aware of the financial affluence of this province at this time in our history. A number of people have said to me, "How is it that when Ontario has a surplus in excess of \$1 billion there are simply no rooms?" There is no room at the inn, as it were. These people say, "Where are the priorities of a government that does not first address shelter for the people who live in its jurisdiction?"

It is the lack of initiative to resolve these severe problems for the average person in Ontario that causes me the greatest grief. It is grief about the parents of a 24-year-old son, and this is just one example. This son, aged 24, functions at about a five-year-old or six-year-old child's age. He has been waiting now for two years for accommodation in a group home facility.

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In the meantime, he is causing duress and unhappiness for the people in the community where he lives because he is a grown man physically. He is obviously a man of 24 and in this case is a good size physically. Because he thinks like a five-year-old, he wants to play with the children in his community who are that age. Of course, the police and the neighbours are involved because they do not understand that this child is not going to harm the little children with whom he wishes to play. They perceive him as an adult man wanting to play with little children, yet this family does not have any alternative accommodation for the 24-year-old son.

Time and time again, they go to the different government agencies and are told repeatedly: "We are sorry. We do not have a program because we simply do not have any money." How is it that in this year of 1987, with a \$1-billion surplus, any government could say to the parents of this young man, "We do not have any money for the program your son needs?"

There is a 67-year-old mother with Alzheimer's disease who is trying to cope with a 41-year-old mentally retarded son. They live in a one-bedroom apartment. The 41-year-old son cannot get out to benefit from programs for mentally retarded people because his mother, at 67 with Alzheimer's disease, cannot cope with getting this 41-year-old son up, dressed and out

in time to get the bus to take him to the ARC Industries program.

That is just one further illustration. I am sure every member in this Legislature has a dozen stories a month where there is a need for some government-funded program. We are not talking about luxuries. We are talking about necessities. We are talking about the survival of human beings.

It distresses me greatly that with this Liberal government, in the priorities the province has had during the last two years we have not seen a priority great enough to first address the real survival needs of human beings. Yes, we have seen some increased funding in some areas, but it is amazing when one looks at the very real figures of what has happened with Ontario's tax revenues in the last year alone.

During 1986-87, Ontario tax revenues have increased by 15.4 per cent, yet in the same period the average per capita disposable income in Ontario increased by only 4.7 per cent. The wages of Ontario workers have increased by 4.3 per cent. Hospital grants rose by 7.4 per cent. Unconditional grants to municipalities went up by only 4.9 per cent. Provincial grants to colleges inched up by 4.3 per cent. General legislative grants to school boards moved up by just five per cent. The Progressive Conservative caucus does not think it is fair that a government should do twice as well as its people and yet not care for the desperate needs of those people in this province.

I look forward to the beginning, in 15 minutes, of the presentation of the budget by the Treasurer, the member for Brant-Oxford-Norfolk. I hope that in the budget we will see the very real needs of the people of this province addressed without any further delay and without any further suffering in human terms.

On motion by Mr. Harris, the debate was adjourned.

The House recessed at 3:45 p.m.

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BUDGET RESOLUTION

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved, seconded by Hon. Mr. Peterson, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Mr. Speaker: With the indulgence of the members, as has been the custom, I would like to ask the pages to deliver a copy of the budget to each of the members before the Treasurer commences his reading.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: While the distribution of the document is being completed, I want to draw to

the members' attention that we were able to locate a special trillium in the woods of South Dumfries, and there is a picture of it on the cover of the document.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does every member have a copy?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I should also indicate to the members—perhaps it is a mistake to do so—that it will take me approximately an hour to read this. It was suggested by one of my friends in the New Democratic Party that perhaps we could just table this with Hansard and all go home. On the other hand, because of its importance, I feel it necessary to continue to bring the good news to this House and to the taxpayers of the province.

Before beginning to read the document, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to the civil servants in the Ministry of Treasury and Economics, in the Management Board, in the Ministry of Revenue and in the office of the House leader of the government for co-operating, and for all the work, the research and the development that have gone into the preparation of the document.

BUDGET STATEMENT

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This budget will outline the government's record of fiscal management and present an economic plan for this year.

Under the leadership of the Premier (Mr. Peterson), the government has dealt effectively with the issues confronting it over the past two years and has given a high priority to education, technology development and entrepreneurship. These are the surest foundations of Ontario's continued prosperity. We have increased spending on vital programs that have been starved for funding due to economic constraints. We have funded programs for special regions and for groups requiring special assistance. At the same time, we have significantly reduced the provincial deficit. Our aim now is to build on the sound fiscal foundation that has been established.

Ontario's economy is showing solid growth, but some regions, some economic sectors and some people are not sharing fully in the benefits. The government is committed to working towards a durable prosperity that is shared by all. Today I am laying out our plan to do this.

Before proceeding, I acknowledge the contribution of the standing committee on finance and economic affairs. I also thank the many organizations and individuals who appeared before the committee and met with me and with Treasury staff.

Ontario is experiencing its fifth straight year of economic expansion. Over the past two years, the real gross provincial product has grown by 9.4 per cent, faster than any of the major economies in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Lower interest rates, lower oil prices, stable inflation rates and high and growing employment levels have encouraged consumer spending. In addition, favourable exchange rates and competitive cost structures have made Ontario an attractive location for investment by both foreign and domestic enterprises.

The world economy has been undergoing a major restructuring and the impact on Ontario has been significant. Some traditional industries have experienced decline, while a range of new industrial activities has emerged. This restructuring has been accompanied by job losses in some industries and some communities. Over the past two years, major layoffs in Ontario have affected some 27,000 people and have caused hardship not only to these individuals and their families but also to their communities.

During the same period, newly emerging industries and a generally strong and more efficient economy have meant that job gains overall have far exceeded job losses. On a net basis, overall employment increased by 312,000 jobs. In fact, Ontario has had faster employment growth than any other major industrial jurisdiction in North America.

Business capital investment has been one of the major sources of Ontario's recent economic strength and represents a vote of long-term confidence in our future. Over the past two years, private sector capital spending has grown by more than 30 per cent. In 1987, we expect a further increase of 7.2 per cent to a total of \$24 billion.

Manufacturing investment in Ontario will remain strong, with transportation equipment maintaining the largest share. US and Japanese auto companies are undertaking major capital investments. As well, many Canadian-based auto parts suppliers are investing in new technology, often through joint venture projects.

Ontario's competitive position in materials, labour and electricity costs has allowed the province to attract a large share of new automotive investments in North America. State-of-the-art production facilities, a well-trained work force and innovative management techniques will enable Ontario's auto industry to continue to compete effectively with other jurisdictions in North America.

Capital investment in the electrical, high-technology electronic and machinery industries, as well as in pulp and paper and in clothing, will also show significant increases.

I am especially encouraged by the increase in investment activity in northern Ontario. In addition to new capital spending in pulp and paper, several new mines are under development and mining investment is growing.

Consumer spending remains strong, particularly in housing and household goods. Housing starts rose to 81,500 units last year, the highest level in more than a decade. We expect a further 82,000 housing starts this year.

The overall economic outlook for the province continues to be favourable. Real gross provincial product is forecast to grow by 3.5 per cent in 1987. Job creation will average 125,000 and the unemployment rate is expected to average 6.5 per cent for the year. Consumer price increases will remain moderate, averaging 4.2 per cent.

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This budget will present policies in five priority areas: first, to promote economic expansion and job creation; second, to enhance opportunities in sectors and regions that are not fully participating in the benefits of economic growth; third, to rebuild our ageing infrastructure and accommodate growth pressures; fourth, to improve important social programs and to promote a fairer distribution of wealth in our society; and fifth, to maintain our vigilance over tax levels and the deficit.

It is essential that Ontario maintain and, indeed, increase its share of world trade and investment. To do so, the government must encourage the development of areas that are crucial to our international competitiveness, including technology and education.

The Premier's Council on technology was created in July 1986, in recognition of the importance of technology to the realization of our economic potential. The council plays a pivotal role in the government's technology development strategy. I acknowledge that in setting our first-year spending plan for the technology fund we allocated more money, as it turned out, than could be prudently spent. It is of foremost importance that these funds are spent wisely, not quickly, and the council will continue to help us ensure the money we have committed is well spent. Our \$1-billion commitment remains intact.

The members of the council are busy people in their own chosen and widely varying fields, yet

they have devoted considerable time and effort to the task they have undertaken.

The council has provided guidelines and criteria for the industry component of the technology fund and for the centres of excellence program. Its members have insisted on a rigorous review of all proposals, many of which are now being subjected to a peer review by an international panel of experts. Over the next few months, the government will be announcing its decisions in respect of the proposed centres of excellence.

The council has also commissioned an in-depth study of the competitiveness of our industry. This study will help guide us in directing our expenditures to best effect.

It is the government's top priority to improve the quality of education in Ontario. This includes not only schools and post-secondary institutions but also the entire spectrum of lifelong opportunities for learning and skills development. It is a crucial responsibility. Education is not only essential for long-term economic growth; it is also the key to the development of each person's full potential.

Ontario's education system has adapted well in recent years to society's changing needs, but as former Ontario Youth Commissioner Ken Dryden pointed out in his recent report:

"The rapidly accelerating pace of change will require people to have more adaptable skills and attitudes, to be better able to deal with change. Increased use of technology will mean less physical labour but the need for greater conceptual and numeracy, analytical and problem-solving skills."

The throne speech set out the steps we are taking to broaden the range and improve the quality of educational opportunities. The government attaches particular importance to establishing learning skills projects, upgrading the basic curriculum and improving the assessment of student achievement. We are launching new programs to make educational resources more readily available, especially to Franco-Ontarians and students in the north.

We have also acted to provide school facilities in areas of rapid growth. Capital grants for education have been set at \$147 million for this fiscal year, which is double the amount provided in 1984-85.

Equally important are the government's efforts to confront the problem of young people leaving high school without having a job or plans for further training or education. While the drop-out rate is improving, it is still unacceptably

high and special efforts are required to reduce it further.

Last year we launched a two-part program to help students remain in school and to ease their transition from classroom to work place. The co-operative education component is providing 28,500 Ontario students with alternating periods of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. The other phase, the transition to employment component, will help some 9,000 students find jobs when they leave school.

The budget provides funding for additional education initiatives announced in the throne speech. My colleague the minister will give details shortly.

Provincial and local spending for primary and secondary education in Ontario will total almost \$9 billion this year, or \$47 million every school day.

Miss Stephenson: What level of percentage?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Forty-six. Where has my friend been?

In 1985, the government introduced the Futures program to deal with the unemployment problems of out-of-school youth. The program has been highly successful. Since its inception in November 1985, Futures has provided more than 50,000 young people with a chance to upgrade their education as well as their life and work skills. The Futures program will be strengthened by assisting workers under the age of 25 to return to school on a part-time basis.

For older workers, who often have difficulty finding new jobs upon layoff—I bring to the attention of the former minister—the government will provide training support to help them acquire new skills, at a cost of \$5 million this fiscal year and \$14 million in a full year.

The government's commitment to post-secondary education is clearly reflected in its record of funding improvements. Last autumn, I announced that universities would receive a substantial base increase in operating grants of 11.5 per cent for 1987-88. Ontario's colleges of applied arts and technology received a special allocation of \$60 million in 1986-87. These funds will continue in the funding base for 1987-88 and beyond.

The need to upgrade facilities in universities and colleges has accumulated due to capital funding constraints dating from the mid-1970s. The government will provide \$100 million for post-secondary capital expenditures in 1987-88. This represents a doubling of the capital funding provided as recently as two years ago.

Accessibility to post-secondary education can be hindered by concern over the rising burden of loan repayment facing students upon graduation. The government has taken concrete measures to address this problem.

The Ontario student assistance program has been increased by \$25 million, or 17 per cent, for the coming academic year. As well, a new interest relief plan will be introduced for those having difficulty repaying Ontario student loans. Unlike the Canada student loans plan, Ontario's plan will be closely geared to the graduate's actual income. The Minister of Colleges and Universities (Mr. Sorbara) will call on the federal government to extend its interest relief provisions to graduates in low-paying, part-time or internship positions.

One benefit of having outstanding educational institutions is that their excellence can be shared with others. Accordingly, we will assist 1,000 highly qualified graduate students from outside Canada by reducing their tuition fees to the level of domestic students. The benefits of this \$5-million program will be substantial. The presence of international students in our universities strengthens the cultural and business links between Ontario and other countries, and it enriches the institutions themselves.

In addition to the measures we are taking to expand our economic potential, we are acting to enhance assistance to those regions that are not fully sharing in Ontario's current economic expansion.

Our northern economy is undergoing a difficult process of adjustment to a world economy characterized by more intense competition and low mineral prices. Many resource companies have been forced to cut costs, rationalize operations and to lay off employees or, in some cases, to shut down operations. Even though economic conditions are improving in some parts of the north, unemployment in the region as a whole is four percentage points higher than the provincial average.

We have responded to these difficulties by providing short-term assistance to help communities and individuals adjust to major layoffs. We have also committed ourselves to a strategy for long-term revitalization of the northern economy. This strategy is aimed at strengthening the resource-based sector and diversifying the economy by attracting new investment and making government programs and services more accessible and relevant to northern needs. It is our objective to return prosperity to the north by

making it more competitive and less vulnerable to volatile resource markets.

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In 1985, we established the \$100-million northern development fund. To date, some \$17 million has been spent. This fiscal year, we expect to spend a further \$28 million in support of community adjustment, business and tourism development, new educational opportunities and northern job creation.

We have also set up nine northern development councils to advise the government on ways to achieve our northern development objectives.

The transfer of several government offices from Toronto to northern Ontario will assist in the diversification and stabilization of the local economies. When these transfers are completed, more than 1,200 permanent public service jobs will have been moved to northern Ontario. These relocations represent an annual payroll of \$40 million.

We have consulted and listened. We have acted. We know that more needs to be done for northern Ontario.

People in the north are very concerned about transportation issues because of the distances they have to travel. We have consulted widely with northerners—in fact, our entire caucus has been up there consulting—and have been told that while there is concern about gasoline price differentials, the immediate priority should be that of improving northern highways.

In response, the government has decided to increase the allocation for northern transportation by over 32 per cent, or \$26 million, to a level of \$107 million for 1987-88, most of which will be spent on northern roads. Also, some of the extra funding will be dedicated to key northern access highways in order to improve commercial transportation and tourism. In addition to improving transportation in the north, a significant number of construction jobs will be created.

For decades, many northerners have believed that a larger share of revenue derived from their resource heritage should flow back into the region. We are establishing a northern Ontario heritage fund to help ensure long-term economic growth and diversification in the region. This fund will have an initial allocation of \$30 million. The fund will operate under the guidance of the Minister of Northern Development and Mines (Mr. Peterson), who also happens to be the Premier. He will be assisted in his decisions by a heritage fund advisory council, with representatives from each of the northern development councils.

As a further benefit to the northern economy, I am proposing a three-year mining profits tax exemption for new mines. This exemption would apply to the net income of newly producing mines, and I estimate the value of the incentive to be \$5 million per year.

Many parts of eastern Ontario are not fully participating in our economic growth. The throne speech announced a number of initiatives to address this problem, including the establishment of a small business services network and the opening of an Eastern Ontario Development Corp. office in Pembroke.

In addition, I am announcing a new eastern Ontario community economic development program to enhance growth and employment opportunities in the region. Under this program, the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology, in conjunction with local economic development commissioners and other municipal officials, will identify special opportunities for enhanced community economic development. We will allocate \$25 million of this program over the next five years. The program will provide funding to co-ordinate business-related assistance programs and to help finance business support services and capital assistance.

The tourism industry represents a major source of economic potential, particularly for many of Ontario's smaller communities and the northern and eastern regions of the province. The government is committed to the strengthening and revitalization of this important sector. In the past year, we have significantly enhanced our marketing efforts and extended the tourism redevelopment incentive and the grading assistance programs for a further two years. Under the TRIP program, provincial loan guarantees are expected to reach \$130 million this year.

The Destinations North and East programs we introduced in 1986 have received an enthusiastic welcome from the industry. To ensure that quality proposals are not passed over or delayed because of a lack of available funding, an additional \$5 million has been provided to these programs.

This budget provides funds to make tourism and recreation programs and facilities more accessible to disabled persons and to provide financial support for the renovation and development of heritage inns.

These measures will bring the growth in the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation's budget to 9.3 per cent.

The agriculture community in Ontario continues to face difficult times. While red meat prices

have improved, low prices for many other farm commodities, high debt loads and declining farm asset values continue to place many of our farmers in a tight financial position. Increasingly, farmers have to supplement their incomes from nonagricultural sources.

In recognition of the problems facing the agriculture community, the government has taken a number of initiatives. In 1985, we introduced the Ontario family farm interest rate reduction program. During the past year we extended the program and enhanced it further. In the fiscal year just ended, \$50 million was provided through the farm income stabilization program. To assist in the orderly rationalization of the tobacco industry, we are contributing \$15 million to the federal-provincial tobacco assistance plan. In 1986, we introduced the Ontario pork industry improvement program, for which funding will be increased to \$11.3 million in 1987-88.

This fiscal year, we will be taking further steps to assist the industry.

To stimulate the agricultural and rural economy we are introducing a \$50-million farm management, safety and repairs program. It will provide grants of up to \$2,500 per farmer to encourage farm safety, improve farm management techniques and assist in the purchase of machinery repairs and grain storage facilities. The program will run from June 1, 1987, to May 31, 1988, and will be available to all farmers with a minimum of \$12,000 in gross farm production income.

As announced in the throne speech, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's headquarters will be moved to Guelph. This will improve communication among federal, provincial, university and private sector farm organizations and enhance Guelph as a centre of excellence in agricultural research and training.

The beginning farmers assistance program will be extended for five years.

For 1987-88, benefits under the OFFIRR program will be maintained at the 100 per cent level, rather than the scheduled reduction to 70 per cent.

To encourage sound land management practices, the government is introducing a new, three-year, \$40-million land stewardship program. This program will provide financial assistance to farmers for restoring soil productivity and for reducing environmental damage on both productive and marginal lands.

Property taxation of farms is a long-standing issue in Ontario. Currently farmers receive a

rebate from the province of 60 per cent of farm property taxes paid. The farm tax reduction program recognizes that productive farm property should not bear the full brunt of property taxes, but as currently structured it does not concentrate benefits on bona fide farmers. This situation is inequitable and should be corrected.

I am proposing a revised program to provide a more equitable tax treatment.

Beginning this year, the farm tax rebate will increase from 60 per cent of taxes paid on the entire farm to 100 per cent of taxes assessed on farm land and outbuildings. I want to make it clear that this will be a rebate, not an exemption. Farm residences will be considered separately and will continue to be taxed as farm property.

Starting in 1988, the rebate will be paid in two instalments. The requirement to prepay 60 per cent of taxes will be discontinued. As a result of these improvements, the total value of these rebates will increase by 17 per cent.

Similar changes will be introduced in respect of managed forest lands, and we will introduce a new rebate program for wetlands. The Ministers of Agriculture and Food (Mr. Riddell) and Natural Resources (Mr. Kerrio) will be announcing the full details shortly. With these announcements, funding for the Ministry of Agriculture and Food will have increased 72 per cent since we took office.

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Sustained economic growth is our goal for Ontario, but we must recognize that growth is putting great pressure on our school and transportation facilities, particularly around Metro Toronto. Moreover, housing and environmental pressures must be addressed. Growth generates certain problems that, without good management and planning, would threaten the quality of our urban life.

With respect to school facilities, I have already indicated that the capital budget has been set at \$147 million for the current fiscal year. In recognition of the pressing need to plan now for the rapid growth that is taking place in some Ontario communities, we have approved a capital budget of \$226 million for 1988-89.

Ontario has one of the world's safest, most efficient transportation systems. But we agree with municipal representatives who have warned that it will take major expenditures to keep it that way. After years of spending constraints, Ontario's network of roads, bridges and expressways is beginning to deteriorate. We must act now to reverse that trend. In addition, we have to make

provision for traffic congestion relief and other improvements to the existing network.

The government has decided, therefore, to provide a major enrichment of \$290 million over the next three years to upgrade and expand the transportation system. As the minister has already announced, \$130 million of this new funding will be spent in the greater Toronto area. As well as addressing other priority needs for municipal roads and transit, this will enable an immediate start on Highway 407. The balance of \$160 million in new funding will be spent outside the greater Toronto area to address vital road and transit requirements.

Interjections.

Mr. Speaker: Order. All members have copies to follow. Many of our guests do not have copies to follow and find it very difficult to hear.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In this fiscal year, in addition to the enrichment for northern roads, \$50 million more will be provided for other regions of the province.

Transit spending will continue at high levels. Service improvements and expansion of the GO Transit system will be funded at more than \$100 million this fiscal year. We will also be providing \$177 million to municipalities for capital spending on their transit systems. In addition, the government is continuing discussions with municipalities and transit authorities to examine carefully proposals for new transit projects for the greater Toronto area.

With the three-year enrichment I am announcing today, the 1987-88 municipal roads allocation will be increased by a further \$28 million to a total of \$601 million, for an increase of 9.5 per cent over last year. In addition, we will continue the \$30-million Ontario municipal improvement fund.

Transportation spending will rise by 7.8 per cent in 1987-88. The government is firmly resolved that by the end of this decade, Ontario will have a safer, more efficient and better-maintained transportation system.

As I mentioned earlier, the Ontario housing industry has returned to its full strength; however, the problem of providing enough low-cost rental accommodation continues to be a major challenge. Since taking office, the government has increased significantly the level of spending on housing programs. This year, the ministry will begin the next phase of its assured housing strategy that will, in total, provide a further \$220 million in capital support for the construction of more affordable rental housing.

The government will also provide an additional \$50 million annually to support the operating costs of these initiatives. As part of this strategy, we will enhance housing and integrated support services for the homeless, the disabled, discharged psychiatric patients, victims of family violence, the frail elderly and other socially disadvantaged persons.

In conjunction with the housing industry, we will undertake a program to use provincially owned lands for the production of affordable rental accommodation. We invite the federal government, with its extensive urban land holdings, to join us in this innovative approach.

This fiscal year, the Ministry of Housing will have available a total of \$378 million, an increase of more than 34 per cent over the level spent last year. Details of the new initiatives will be announced by the minister.

For 1987-88, this budget provides more than \$11 billion for health-care programs, including initiatives announced in the throne speech. This represents more than \$1,200 per person. The government will provide additional funding to improve the quality of care in nursing homes, establish new addiction treatment services for youth, and increase access to health-care professionals and community mental health services in the north.

We are also aware of the greatest challenge in managing Ontario's health care system: to maintain quality in the face of rising demand, while at the same time holding costs within affordable limits. Two major studies of the future of our health-care system are under way—the Ontario health review panel and the panel on health goals for Ontario. The government is confident that their reports will recommend fresh responses to this challenge.

The government is proud of its record in supporting a greater emphasis on community-based services. We are also committed to maintaining and enhancing institutional services. In the 1986 budget, I announced a major hospital capital expansion which will improve access to institutional services.

The Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Ms. Munro) will be announcing a government-wide range of initiatives to enrich the cultural mosaic of our province. This budget provides \$4 million in new funds to begin the implementation of a series of activities, including expanded second language training, multilingual resource materials for newcomers and increased support to community museums and activities.

The government places a high priority on protecting the environment and has introduced several major pollution abatement programs.

To reduce the level of toxic contaminants entering our waterways, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bradley) has introduced a municipal-industrial strategy for abatement.

An \$8 million comprehensive waste management program is being introduced to assist municipalities in upgrading landfill sites and in developing waste management facilities.

Deteriorating water and sewer systems throughout the province must be rebuilt before they require even more costly replacement. To determine the extent and urgency of this problem, \$14 million is being made available over the next three years to assist municipalities in undertaking detailed assessments of the condition of their facilities.

Although most of the pollution in the Niagara River originates from American sources, Ontario is committed to cleaning up domestic sources. In support of Canada's international agreement with the United States to reduce toxics in the river by 50 per cent by 1996, we recently announced more than \$9 million over the next three years towards water pollution control projects in Welland and Fort Erie.

In total, an additional \$49 million in capital funding is being provided this fiscal year for waste management and water and sewer projects.

Under the 1987 Canada-Ontario Agreement on Acid Rain, the two governments will each make available up to \$85 million. These funds will assist Ontario's three largest industrial sources of acid gas emissions in financing the large investments required to meet the province's emissions target by 1994.

The total budget of the Ministry of the Environment has been set at \$418 million, 16 per cent larger than last year.

The federal government did not respond favourably to the province's request that it participate in protective measures to deal with the problems created by high water levels in the Great Lakes. Although lake levels have receded in recent months, many municipalities along Lakes Huron, Erie and St. Clair have sustained damage to publicly owned infrastructure. To respond to immediate needs while a longer term solution is being developed, I am providing \$6 million to share the cost of needed capital repairs. This funding will supplement existing capital assistance programs.

We believe there is an important link between strong social programs and the health of our

economy. Fiscal responsibility and social conscience are not mutually exclusive.

Mr. R. F. Johnston: Who wrote that line?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: People on both sides can listen to that.

We have made substantial progress towards improving our social programs and we will do more.

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The government realizes that high-quality, affordable child care is both an economic and a social need and that parents require a range of choices—co-operative, nonprofit, private and informal—to suit their family circumstances.

The issue is not confined to Ontario. In recognition of its national dimensions, federal-provincial discussions are under way. The Minister of Community and Social Services (Mr. Sweeney) is taking an active part in these discussions.

We believe that a national policy should provide support for nonprofit and commercial centres. In addition, there is a need for capital grants and startup money to nonprofit operations. Furthermore, the current system of subsidies to needy parents should be simplified and made more flexible. In this regard, we are concerned about the directions proposed by the special House of Commons committee on child care.

While we have every expectation that the current negotiations will result in a national strategy, given the pressing needs in this area we have decided to take some action now. We will provide an additional \$26 million for child care initiatives this year, raising our total commitment to child care to \$185 million.

Over the next three years, the government will provide \$33 million in capital funding. The minister will be announcing the details. Moreover, planning is under way to provide child care spaces in all new schools and to encourage municipalities to require child care facilities in new commercial buildings.

In recognition of the needs of the low-income disabled, I am increasing the guaranteed annual income system for the disabled benefits by \$50 per month, to be paid beginning June 30, 1987. This change will cost \$45 million this fiscal year and \$54 million in a full year.

In addition, funding will be provided to improve our system of community support services for the disabled. Opportunities for disabled adults to maintain an independent existence in their own communities will be enhanced and the special needs of physically handicapped children at home will be addressed.

Since 1980, Ontario has paid tax grants to seniors for the first \$500 of their property taxes. To help Ontario seniors continue to live independently, I propose to increase the maximum grant from \$500 to \$600 a year. In the fall, this enrichment will be included in the grant cheques to 570,000 Ontario seniors' households. These benefits will provide \$55 million in 1987-88, bringing total property tax support for seniors to \$385 million this fiscal year.

There is a pressing need to maintain and upgrade the municipal and charitable homes for the aged. Under the capital rehabilitation program announced in 1985, more than 60 homes have already received funding. The government will provide a further \$100 million to renovate additional homes over the next six years.

Improvements are also needed in our taxation system to better reflect people's ability to pay their taxes. I expect tax reform to involve a reduction in tax burden for low-income Ontarians, but we cannot ask low-income people to wait for tax reform. Today, I am bringing forward three measures designed to ease their tax burden.

I am proposing legislation to strengthen our commitment to the Ontario property tax credit system. The basic property tax credit will be increased from \$180 to \$230, effective for the 1987 tax year. As a result, about 1.8 million low- and moderate-income tax filers who pay property taxes or rent will share an increase in benefits of \$85 million.

This enrichment will raise the cost of the Ontario tax credit program to \$360 million and will make local tax burdens fairer and more affordable.

But more can be done to ensure fair taxes for lower-income citizens. As members will recall, I enriched Ontario's tax reduction program for 1987 in the last budget. For 1988, I plan to expand the Ontario tax reduction program by an additional \$10 million, bringing total tax cuts under the program to \$35 million. As a result, an additional 100,000 people will pay no Ontario income tax and 60,000 people will pay less Ontario income tax.

This action means that since taking office, the government will have doubled the number of Ontario tax filers receiving income tax reductions. Fully 600,000 taxpayers, who pay up to \$270 each in federal income tax, will pay no Ontario income tax in 1988 due to this program.

We will also substantially reduce the number of Ontarians who pay Ontario health insurance plan premiums. Effective for 1988, the income

limits under which premiums are reduced or eliminated will be increased. As a result, another 40,000 individuals and families with low income will no longer pay premiums. This provides an additional benefit of \$20 million.

In total, these measures to reduce income and property taxes and OHIP premiums will put \$115 million into the hands of low- and moderate-income people.

We have made a commitment to a \$4 exemption level for prepared food. I am pleased to announce that I am proposing the full implementation of this promise, effective June 1, 1987, at a projected cost of \$40 million this year.

There are two matters on the federal-provincial horizon that could affect this year's fiscal plan and indeed the Ontario economy. I refer to tax reform and the Canada-United States trade negotiations.

On June 18, the federal government will table its proposals for tax reform. I believe the current tax system is failing the tests of fairness, simplicity and taxpayer acceptance. The proliferation of tax preferences has made the system complex, confusing and inequitable. With the right changes, the Canadian tax system can be fairer, more competitive and less intrusive into business and personal affairs.

I would like to commend the Minister of Finance on the forthright and co-operative manner in which he has dealt with the provinces on tax reform. Since last September, provincial treasurers have met with Mr. Wilson on four occasions to exchange ideas, concerns and advice on this important issue. In those discussions, I have outlined a number of key areas for federal consideration. I would like to summarize these for the members today.

In Ontario, we are studying major changes to our social welfare system. While the review is not complete, we have already found wide variation in benefits to social assistance recipients in similar circumstances, and serious disincentives to work. Tax reform must recognize that the tax system and the social assistance system need to be harmonized. Tax reform should not preclude the introduction of a guaranteed annual income.

Fairness also requires that exemptions be clearly justifiable. I have indicated my concern to Mr. Wilson, repeatedly, that the \$500,000 capital gains exemption is unfair and leaves untaxed the profits from a number of types of transactions of dubious economic benefit to Ontario. This aspect has to be attended to if

Canadians are to accept the spirit of the overall tax reform package.

I believe that improvements in simplicity and national tax harmony should also be objectives of tax reform. Members will be aware of the successful tax collection agreement for the administration of personal income tax between the provinces and the federal government. If the federal proposals to reform the federal sales tax result in a simpler and more progressive system, one which is generally acceptable, I believe the provinces should consider co-ordinating their sales tax structures with the federal system.

The province of Ontario now administers its own corporate income tax. While this separate administration provides maximum flexibility, it puts added paper burden on corporate taxpayers. If the federal corporate tax reforms are fair and consistent with Ontario's economic priorities, I plan to examine the possibility of re-entering a corporate income tax collection agreement with Ottawa. However, I would consider such action only with assurances of flexibility to pursue important provincial economic objectives through this tax.

I want to make it clear that consideration of these options will not impair the employment of any Ontario public servant associated with the current tax administration.

Federal reform will alter tax bases, rates and the shares of taxes coming from the three largest sources of federal revenues. Because provincial tax systems are closely linked with the federal tax bases, provincial taxes will have to be amended. I believe that provinces should not undermine federal rate reductions associated with tax reform. Neither should tax reform impose added costs or revenue losses on the provinces. It is my intention to meet both these objectives in designing any required adjustments.

1650

There is much uncertainty in the area of Canada-United States bilateral trade negotiations. No one can yet be sure that there will be an agreement or indeed which of numerous possible features will be included should an agreement be reached. It is unquestionable that Canada-US trade issues are of utmost importance to our economy, our social policies and our cultural development.

Once I have greater certainty on the details of federal tax reform and the outcome of the trade negotiations, I will assess the impact on my economic forecast and fiscal plan, review our spending and tax policies and report to the House.

The emergence of a global trading economy has been accompanied by a global financial market. As the links between Canadian businesses and foreign markets have grown in importance, the existence in Toronto of a vigorous and outward-looking financial services industry has been of increasing benefit to the city, the province and the nation. The government is taking steps to encourage new competition and growth in the securities industry and to enhance Toronto's standing as a centre of domestic and international finance.

In addition, I intend to examine income and capital tax changes to make Ontario a more competitive location for international financial activity. This may be necessary to ensure that the financial industry makes business decisions on the basis of economic conditions rather than tax planning.

I would like to provide an update on the 1986-87 fiscal year. Last year's revenue was almost \$1.3 billion higher than the original forecast. First the federal revenue forecast for personal income tax turned out to be \$670 million too low. Second, higher corporate profits, an exceptional housing market, stronger retail sales and other factors combined to produce additional revenue of \$602 million.

Of these additional funds, \$233 million was used to reduce the provincial deficit. We provided \$330 million to ease pressures on local mill rates, by reducing the level of short-term borrowing required by local school boards during the first three months of the calendar year.

A further \$121 million was used to meet additional capital expenditure requirements. A total of \$578 million was used to fund increased operating needs in post-secondary institutions, for health care and for social assistance.

When we took office, we faced a planned deficit of \$2.2 billion for 1985-86 which we reduced to \$1.6 billion. During 1986-87, the deficit was cut to \$1.3 billion. I now turn to my fiscal plan for 1987-88, which, I am proud to say, includes a further reduction in the deficit to \$980 million.

The fiscal plan I am putting forward today involves total expenditure of \$34.8 billion and revenues of \$33.8 billion. Projected net cash requirements stand at \$980 million, a further reduction of \$331 million from last year's reduced level. The province's operating position, which deals with current revenue and current expenditure, stood at a deficit of \$416 million in 1985-86. In 1987-88, this operating deficit will be reduced to \$28 million, an

improvement of \$388 million. Since this is a goal I set out in last year's budget, I am proud to say that it means the province's operating account is essentially balanced.

I expect to be able to secure \$350 million in reductions through expenditure savings and constraints in the current fiscal year and I have reflected this in the overall expenditure target. Each ministry will be required to show Management Board of Cabinet where it can cut spending in areas other than transfer payments. Exceptions will be made for selected operations such as psychiatric hospitals and correctional institutions.

Ontario's total borrowing in 1986-87 was more than \$300 million below the level projected in the 1986 budget. The province borrowed \$232 million from the Canada pension plan and repaid \$333 million in maturing CPP debt issued in the late 1960s. As a result, Ontario's own CPP debt declined by \$101 million.

Ontario's 1987-88 financing needs will be less than \$1 billion. With the amounts expected to be available from the teachers' superannuation fund, no CPP funds will be needed in this fiscal year for Ontario's own purposes.

We will also be repaying the final instalment of the province's deutsche mark loans, which were undertaken in the late 1960s and early 1970s. I am pleased to report that, by the end of this year, the province will have retired all its outstanding foreign debt.

The next stuff is particularly good. I would like to sum up the 1987 budget for the province of Ontario.

It cuts taxes by \$246 million, primarily for the elderly and low-income people.

It funds essential social and economic priorities in education, health, housing, child care, transportation and high technology.

It provides important new programs for northern and eastern Ontario.

It delivers needed assistance to our agriculture community.

It reduces the deficit by \$331 million.

And, it contains no tax increases.

Mr. Speaker: Does any other member wish to participate in this debate?

On motion by Mr. Harris, the debate was adjourned.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I ask for unanimous consent to revert to introduction of bills.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Agreed to.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

RETAIL SALES TAX AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved first reading of Bill 62, An Act to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act.

Motion agreed to.

INCOME TAX AMENDMENT ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved first reading of Bill 63, An Act to amend the Income Tax Act.

Motion agreed to.

ONTARIO LOAN ACT

Hon. Mr. Nixon moved first reading of Bill 64, An Act to authorize the raising of Money on the Credit of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

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 Bradley, Hon. J. J., Minister of the Environment (St. Catharines L)
 Brandt, A. S. (Sarnia PC)
 Breaugh, M. J. (Oshawa NDP)
 Callahan, R. V. (Brampton L)
 Conway, Hon. S. G., Minister of Education and acting Minister of Government Services (Renfrew North L)
 Cooke, D. S. (Windsor-Riverside NDP)
 Curling, Hon. A., Minister of Housing (Scarborough North L)
 Dean, G. H. (Wentworth PC)
 Edighoffer, Hon. H. A., Speaker (Perth L)
 Elston, Hon. M. J., Minister of Health (Huron-Bruce L)
 Fulton, Hon. E., Minister of Transportation and Communications (Scarborough East L)
 Gigantes, E. (Ottawa Centre NDP)
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 Gregory, M. E. C. (Mississauga East PC)
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 Johnston, R. F. (Scarborough West NDP)
 Kerrio, Hon. V. G., Minister of Natural Resources and Minister of Energy (Niagara Falls L)
 Kwinter, Hon. M., Minister of Consumer and Commercial Relations and Minister of Financial Institutions (Wilson Heights L)
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 Martel, E. W. (Sudbury East NDP)
 McClellan, R. A. (Bellwoods NDP)
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 Morin, G. E., Deputy Chairman of the Committees of the Whole House and Acting Speaker (Carleton East L)

Morin-Strom, K. (Sault Ste. Marie NDP)

Munro, Hon. L. O., Minister of Citizenship and Culture (Hamilton Centre L)

Nixon, Hon. R. F., Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Revenue and acting Chairman of the Management Board of Cabinet (Brant-Oxford-Norfolk L)

Peterson, Hon. D. R., Premier and President of the Council, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and Minister of Northern Development and Mines (London Centre L)

Pierce, F. J. (Rainy River PC)

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Pope, A. W. (Cochrane South PC)

Reville, D. (Riverdale NDP)

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Sheppard, H. N. (Northumberland PC)

Stephenson, B. M. (York Mills PC)

Stevenson, K. R. (Durham-York PC)

Swart, M. L. (Welland-Thorold NDP)

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Warner, D. W. (Scarborough-Ellesmere NDP)

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